

7.1.46

SUMMONS TO 7.1.46 SINNERS:

FOR

Thinking seriously on their WAYS;
and Turning from their SINS
to GOD without Delay.

IN

Several *SERMONS*, Founded on
PSAL. 119. 59. 60. Tho' Preached on
that, and several other Texts in St. Thomas's
Hospital in Southwark; at his first appoint-
ment to Officiate Therein; and now Pub-
lished for the Use Thereof;

By WILLIAM HUGHES, Hospitaller there.

To day, if you will hear his Voice, harden not your
Hearts, HEB. 3. 7, 8.

Behold, now is the accepted time: now is the day of
Salvation, 2 COR. 6. 2.

L O N D O N,
Printed by J. Richardson, for Tho. Parkhurst,
at the Bible and three Crowns in
Cheapside, 1681.

SINNERS

Thinking seriously on their ways
and turning from their evil
to God without delay

For the Lord is ready to receive
the repentant sinner
and will not despise
his prayer
for the Lord is ready to receive
the repentant sinner
and will not despise
his prayer

WILLIAM HUGHES

To him if you will come
He will receive you
He will receive you
He will receive you

At the Bible and Tract Society
No. 100 N. 3rd St.
Philadelphia, Pa.

69
March 12, 1861
7/6 (1861)

To the Right Worshipful, Sir John
Lawrence Knight, Alderman of the
City of London, and President of
St. Thomas's Hospital in Southwark.
To the Worshipful James Hayes Esq;
Treasurer of the said Hospital;
And to the Rest of the Right Worship-
ful, Worshipful, and Worthy Gover-
nours of the same.

Right Worshipful, Worshipful,
and Worthy Sirs,

THESE First Fruits of my Labours amongst
Your Poor, are, (such as they be) in a
grateful sense, and acknowledgement of
your Unanimous, and Undeserved Kindness,
humbly presented to You. The hopes, that, by
dispersing several Copies hereof into the several
Wards there, I might make them further useful
(with Gods blessing) from the Press; at least
in that place, where they before had done their
most from the Pulpit; were no little Encou-
ragement to adventure, in an Age of so much
Sinfulness, and Censoriousness, the publication
of them. Which being once resolved on; Grati-
tude and Justice too, determine and command
their

The Epistle Dedicatory.

their Dedication, as peculiar to Your Selves ; by Whose Good-Will alone they come to enjoy the Light. This I may dare to say ; That, however the Workmanship shall come off, the Matter handled is not unworthy of the Highest Patronage ; because, it is of Highest Consequence to the Souls of Men.

May the Almighty graciously prosper the Endeavour to Their Benefit ; amply recompence Your Favour to the Author ; and effectually prove it not ill-plac'd, by making him industrious, and Successful in the Work whereto God hath called him by You ! So prayeth

Your very humble,

and most Obliged

Servant,

W. Hughes.

T O

The Epistle.

*To My Beloved Friends, the
Officers, and Patients, in
the Hospital.*

Beloved,

THese Sermons, which, for the great Importance of their Subject, engaged me unto no very little paines about delivering them unto your Eares ; do now again, and on the same account, give me some new trouble for the presenting of them before your Eyes. But if a *Great Apostle* said, *To write the same things unto you, to me indeed is not grievous; but for you it is safe,* Phil. 3. 1. Such a Mean Person as my self may not think much to write out again, and Print for you, what I had wrote before, and Preached to you ; especially, in a Doctrine, wherein your *Eternal Safety* is so much concerned. For, *Without Conversion, there can be no*

The Epistle

Salvation. And yet This Work is almost an utter Stranger in This World! Yea; where the most plain, and piercing Instructions to that purpose are insisted on, and much inculcated in our Congregations, how sadly unsuccessful do they, for the most part, prove? So that Faithful Ministers have cause to mourn before the Lord with the Prophet *Esay's* Lamentation, *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought.* And verily, 'twould almost break their hearts; but that it follows there, yet surely my judgement is with the Lord, and my work with my God, *Isa. 49. 4.* How many cannot endure a Sermon that presseth closely to Turn from Sin? And of those that are endued with so much patience; how few do heed, lay up, and ponder in their heart that which they hear thereof? And where are they, that prove not forgetful Hearers; but are doers of the Word they hear? There's sad occasion of too just complaint; that those who
do

The Epistle.

do attend, consider, and practice, as in Duty bound, are but a little Remnant to the Rest ; and as the Gleaning after Vintage ! And yet, My Friends, Our Eternal Weal, or Wo, dependeth hereupon.

Touching your selves ; I have with Faithfulness already, according to my Skill, made known the Will of God in this great business to you ; and now again, am well contented to be at this further paines and cost, to put you in remembrance of the same. Beware, I do beseech you, lest Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little, should still prove unto little purpose with you. As knowing, that where the Word is not the savor of life unto life, 'twill be of death unto death. Give not the God of Mercy cause to say ; I would have healed Souls ; as well as Bodies in the Hospital ; but, tho' they were fond of succour for the Outward, they would not by any means admit a Cure to their Inward Man.

Rowse up your selves therefore ;

The Epistle.

and give the more diligent heed unto the things that you have heard, lest you should let them slip. And to prevent their loss; see, here they are recovered for, and represented to you. Receive them with a thankful heart to God. And be you sure, daily, diligently, and seriously to Read, Think, Believe, and Do : so shall you be blessed in your deed, Jam.

1. 25.

Amen : The Lord God say so too.

Postscript.

The Marginal Quotations you did not hear ; and need not look on. Tho' they do You no service ; the paines about them may peradventure be both pleasant, and profitable unto Others. At least they shew, where understood, That 'tis no New Doctrine, which your New Minister brings you.

The

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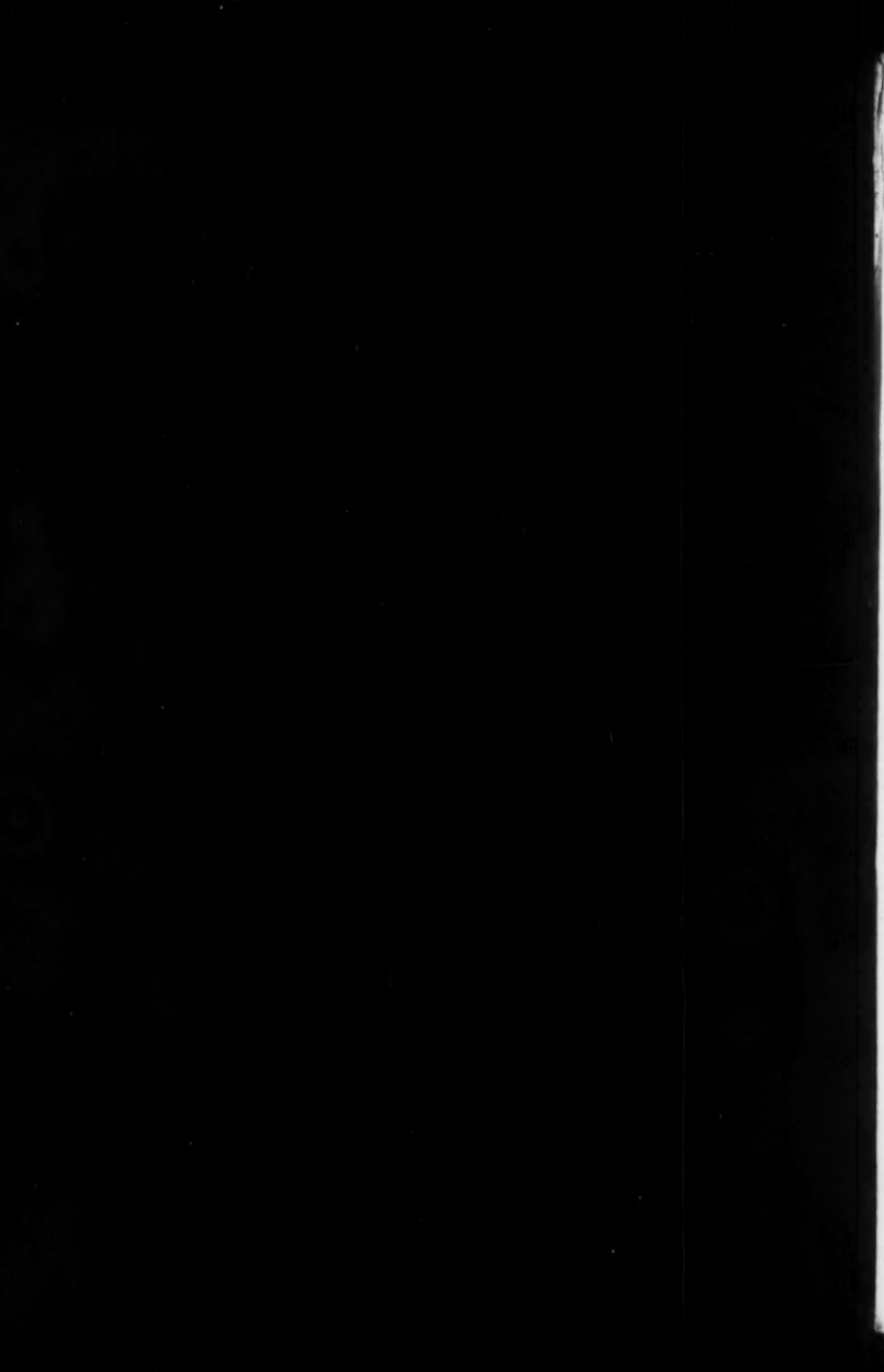
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Summons





SUMMONS to SINNERS,
to Think and Turn.

C H A P. I.

*Text opened, Words explained, and
Proposition layd down.*

Pfal. 119. 59, 60. *I thought on my wayes,
and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.
I made hast, and delayed not to keep thy
Commandements.*

THIS Psalm is without a Title, *Of the Author;*
and thereby wants that No-
tice of its Author, which
most of the other do afford
unto us. However 'tis generally con-
cluded to be *David's*; the Genius and
Spirit thereof being very suitable to
B very

Chap. I. very many of Those that wear his Name upon their Forehead. Which, were it worth the while, might easily be demonstrated in abundance of Particulars. But should there be any doubt remaining about the *Pen-man*; that the *Inditer* was none other than the *Holy Spirit*, needeth none other Evidence, then *serious Reading it*, to profelyte a very *Sceptique* to the *Churches* constant Belief hereof. And truly such is the *height and depth* of the *Excellency* contained herein, that one of the most excellent of all the * *Fathers*, tho he had expounded all the other Psalms, durst not, till at last, and after much and restless importunity, attempt the like on this. For certainly, there cannot but be Holy Admiration raised in every good and humble Soul, as well upon the *wonderful manner* of its Composure, as *Ravishing matter* in all the parts thereof. To make short observations on them both.

Excel-
lency.

I. From Touching the *Former*, It is divided into Two and Twenty Sections;

* Propter alitudinem, paucis cognoscibilem, differebam. Quotiescunque inde cogitare tentavi, semper vires nostræ intentionis excessit. Quanto videtur apertior, tanto mihi profundior videri solet. — ut lectorem atque auditorem, non expositorem necessarium habere credatur, &c. S. Aug. in Proem. Ps. hujus.

and each of them consisteth of Eight Chap. 1:
 verses a piece. And to increase the
 wonder ; As the number of those Secti-
 ons exactly agreeth with the Number
 of Letters in the Hebrew Alphabet ;
 So the first verse of every Section ; and
 every other verse belonging thereun-
 to ; beginneth with the Letter pro-
 per to the order of that part, as agree-
 ing with the Alphabet. For example:
 the *first* Letter of the *Hebrew Alpha-*
bet is *Aleph* ; (whereunto our *English*
 [A] answereth.) Now the *first verse* of
 the first part begins with *Aleph* : so do
 the other seven verses of that Section.
 The second Letter is *Beth* ; (where-
 with agrees our [B]). And the second
 Section of the Psalm hath every one of
 its eight verses begun with that same
 Letter, *Beth*. The Third is *Gimel* ;
 [G] with us. So do all the verses of
 that Part begin likewise. And thus
 it holdeth, in all the other parts of the
 Psalm, to the very end thereof. Two
 and Twenty Letters, and Two and
 Twenty Sections : Every verse in eve-
 ry Section beginning with the same
 Letter ; and that Letter, such as the
 Order of the Alphabet doth require:

Now this Rare and Matchless curio-

Chap. I. sity, being extraordinary ; and yet directed ; to be sure allowed and approved ; by the Holy Spirit ; must needs perswade us, that the Contents hereof have more then ordinary Excellency in the same. And this is plainly manifest

2 From
Matter.

By the latter ; The *Heavenly matter* thereof. For together with the *Excellency* of that, there is also such *Variety* ; that nothing seemeth to be omitted, which may concern the *Inward Motions* of an *Holy Mind*, or *outward Actions* of a *Pious Life*. How often do we meet with *here*, most high Expressions of Faith, and Hope, and likewise Love to God ; of desire after, delight in, Zeal for, together with Fear and Reverence of his Holy Name ? What serious Protestations may be met with, against Sin and Wickedness ? What severe Denunciations against Transgressors ? What Gracious Benedictions on the Righteous ? What thankful Acknowledgments of Divine Goodness ? Earnest Supplications for Mercy and Grace ? Solemn Engagements to all Holy Obedience for the time to come ? Not without *Holy Reflections* upon past mis-

miscarriages, in order to Repentance Chap. 1. and Reformation for the future. Nay, concerning the two last Instances, *First*, His Resolution for future Universal Conformity, is declared, v. 57, *I have said, that I would keep thy words*: not without Prayer for God's *Amen* thereto, v. 58. *Be merciful unto me according to thy word.* And then *secondly*, Here is shewed, what consideration had been upon his past Life and Waies, together with the happy Issue and Success thereof, in my Text.

I thought upon my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandements.

For in these two verses lye plainly Parts of Text. these 2 Things.

I. The Psalmists serious Reflection on his past Condition; that is, his behaviour and State towards God, whilst an Unconverted Sinner: *I thought upon my wayes.*

II. The Blessed Success, that Course had with him unto sincere Repentance and Reformation.

I. As to the substance of the Change upon him made hereby; *I turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.*

Chap. 1.

2. As to the weighty Circumstance of the Time thereof; *I made haste, and delayed not*, about it : viz. *to keep thy Commandements.*

Words o-
pened.

'Tis needful to open the several Terms, that we may more plainly, and fully, reach the mind of God therein.

I thought,
&c.

[*I thought upon*] As we, after *Montanus*, render the Hebrew *חשבה*. Other Translations say, (a) I considered; (b) reasoned on; (c) truly I considered; (d) I pondered and weighed; (e) I diligently weighed, &c. And a very Learned (f) *Hebrecean* tells us, that in this Mood, it signifyeth to reckon, cast up, to think and think again, upon a business. From all which 'tis evident, that this Thinking, is *serious pondering and consideration.*

waies.

Upon my waies. *דרכי*. The word properly signifieth the Road or Journey one is to Travel in : *Metaphorically*; The *Course or Tenour of ones Life.* 1. Including, no doubt, the Inward Frame, the Dispositions and Motions of the Mind: here lying the Root and Principle of our outward Practices. Our Saviour observed, that *out of the abun-*

(a) *Old Translation.* (b) *Septuag.* (c) *Arab.* (d) *Syriack.* (e) *Varabl. & Muis.* (f) *Buxt. Lexic.*

dance of the Heart, the Mouth speaks: Chap. 1.

Mat. 12. 34. And out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, &c. Mat. 15. 19. Tho, I confess, the word chiefly respects External Conversation; where guilt is most obvious, as to others, so to a Mans own observation. And *Waies* and *Goings*; yea *Waies* and *Doings*, being so frequently joyned together in Scripture, argues for this further. See Job 34. 21. Pro. 5. 21. Jer. 7. 3. and 18. 11, &c. The Psalmist then seriously considered of his Heart and Life; how bad they were; the eternal danger he was in, thereon; because he found himself quite out of the way to Heaven, and in the ready Road to Hell; as all Unconverted Sinners are. Thus 'tis the same, *with serious considering of his sinful, and miserable condition; being Unregenerate.*

And (therefore) I turned my feet, A Turned, &c.
Phrase borrowed from a Man that perceiveth he is in the wrong way; and thereon, turns himself to make into the Right. And because the Feet, you know carry the Body, and so the Man, in common Discourse; by an Usual Synechdoche; *Turning of the Feet, is*

Chap. I. *turning of the Man ; viz. from a State and course of Sin into the Right way, which is,*

Testimonies.

Unto thy Testimonies, עֲרֻתְךָ meaning nothing but the Word of God, the Holy Scriptures. These are the way to our journeys End; to Everlasting Life. Search the Scriptures saith our Saviour, in them is Eternal Life ; and you think so, yourselves, John 5.39. So his Great Apostle, They are able to make wise unto Salvation, 2 Tim. 3. 15. And they are very aptly called Testimonies : because they do bear Witness, and Testifie Gods whole Will to us, and our whole Duty to him, touching our Everlasting Bliss. So that 'tis intended, He turned from Sin to God ; the Faith and Obedience of him : whereof the Holy Scripture is the only Rule and Directory.

Made haste, &c.

I made haste, and delayed not. Both a Positive and a Negative way of Expression. Which as it notes, his chearfulness to pursue it ; so it serves especially to shew * the truth and certainty of his quick dispatch in Turning. A Familiar Hebraism ; as you may see, Ps. 22.2. and 30. and 12. The meaning is :

* Studii tum certitudinem, tum alacritatem, tum continuitatem insinuat. Gejer. ap. Pol. Syn.

Notwithstanding any, and all Discou- Chap. 1.
ragements, either from *within*, or from
without; when I had seen and pondered
how sad my Case was in a Natural
State, I was not like the *Guests*, that
had other work to do, and so rejected
the Gracious Invitation, *Luke* 14. 18,
19, 20. Nor yet, as foolish *Felix*;
who under powerful Convictions,
would find hereafter a *Convenient sea-*
son to mind those matters; but for
the present he was inclined otherwise,
Act. 24. 25. No, nor of *Agrippa's* hu-
mour; *who was almost perswaded* to be
a *Christian*; could find in his Heart (as
the saying is) to leave his Sins, and
become a New-man; but yet, went
not through *Stitch* with the business,
Act. 26. 28. No saith the Holy Psal-
mist, *I thought upon my waies*; that
they were waies of Sin and Death:
my heart was not right in the sight of
God, I was in the Gall of bitterness,
and bond of Iniquity, and therefore,
I turned my feet unto thy Testimonies; I
left off the works of darkness, and re-
nounced them; yea, and *without de-*
lay, those thoughts prevailed upon
me to sincere Repentance, and Re-
formation :

Chap. I. formation . to keep thy Commandments. לשמר מצותיך

And now the Words seem ready for a Doctrinal Observation to be made upon them.

Doubt.

But it may be doubted, whether the Psalmist speaketh of himself, as taking this Holy and Happy Course, of *reflecting seriously on his waies*, after his Conversion; or *before it*? If, after his Conversion, this was done by him; then the Question will be, Whether the waies be thought on, were Errors of *Mind*, or *Manners*? But be they, whether you will: a good man upon clear Conviction, cannot but be ready to rectify a mistake in his Opinion; and to reform a miscarriage in his Conversation. And should this Holy Penman be supposed to have respect to *renewed Acts of Repentance in the Converted Estate*; 'twere an Example of singular Usefulness unto every Christian, and well deserving diligent Imitation by him. But, as you have already observed from the past discourse, I take his words as spoken of himself in his Unconverted Condition. And these two Reasons seem to be prevailing for that Opinion.

Satisfact.

I. He

1. He speaks of the *time perfectly* Chap. 1.
past; both in the *Hebrew*, and *other* 1 Reason.
Translations, whereof you have heard.
 Whereas had he meant it of renewed
 and repeated Acts of Repentance after
 Conversion, upon particular new mi-
 stakes or miscarriages; it would have
 been apparently *more proper*, and there-
 fore 'tis *most probable*, he would have
 expressed himself to some such purpose
 as this: *I am often thinking on my waies*;
 or, *'Tis my daily Course so to do*; still
 in the present time. After which man-
 ner he expresseth himself, *Ps. 19. 12,*
13. Who can understand his Errors?
 Particularly, that is? As who should
 say, Lord I am daily enquiring after
 them, and bewailing of them; in the
 whole Bulk, I mean; although I can-
 not find out every single failing. *O*
cleanse thou me from those I cannot espy.

2. He speaketh here, but of *One so-* 2 Reason.
lemn work; and plainly implyeth, but
One special season, wherein he was in-
 gaged about it: which, of necessity,
 must have respect unto the *first Conver-*
sion from a State of Sin to God. I thought
 upon my waies, and turned, &c. Here
 is nothing of repeating the Work, and
 frequency of the times, in doing so.
 There-

Chap. I. Therefore (to pass by others) both the * *Interlineary*, and the *Ordinary Gloss*, do thus understand it. I thought on my waies; *my former bad ones*, saith *That*. And, *This is the Order of Conversion*, is the saying of *This*.

And now the Psalmists *Reflection* proving thus succesful; and his Case being so, not for any reasons peculiar to him-self, but what are common to all others in his *Circumstances*; we are at liberty to give the sense of both these verses, in this one *Proposition*.

The Proposition.

A Sinners serious thoughts upon his sinful and miserable condition, would surely prove successful to that great Duty of present turning of him from his Sin to God.

* *Cogitavi vias priores malas.* Interl. *Hic est Ordo Conversionis.* Gl. Ord.

C H A P. II.

Method; Great Importance of present Turning: 1. As to the Substance of the Duty: proved by Texts and Arguments. 1. Arg. 'Tis the end of our Being and Mercies.

THis is the Point, with Gods assistance, to be discoursed on. And that it may be done to the best advantage, These 3 Things are necessarily to be attended to.

1. I must shew the *Importance of present turning from Sin to God.* Method.

2. The *Efficacy of such serious thoughts unto the same.*

3. *What useful Inferences may be drawn from thence.*

1. The *Importance of present turning from sin to God*, was signified in the *Proposition*, as you heard. And 'tis manifest, that the *Psalmist* hath none other opinion of it. Else, what should make him so *much in earnest*, and so *very speedy* at it? Howsoever, It will certainly be of mighty consequence to us, that this should be evinced more particularly, for the full conviction of
us.

i Part.
Importance of
present
Turning.

Chap. 2. us. For to what purpose otherwise, shall we discourse, how apt and proper any *means* are towards such an *End*, as is not worthy the pursuing? To spend ones breath in the discovery of a sure and certain way to catch great store of Butterflies; however pleasing this may be to Children, would but Create the smiles of wise men, if not their anger, at the irksom folly of it. 'Tis as ridiculous altogether, to be laborious in shewing how a man, that liveth in the Country, might quickly fill his lap with dirt in the midst of Winter. These are such things of little or no value at all; that as there is no reason why they should, so no men will be careful for them. But the case is vastly otherwise in matters of grand Concernment. How to save a sinking Church or Kingdom from apparent ruine coming on it; to preserve our own or dear Relations Life from a gaping Grave that lyeth open to devour it: to find out, and discover expedients that will not fail in Cases of this Nature; all men will acknowledge, that such endeavours well deserve encouragement, and regard unto them; because they serve to ends
of

of the greatest secular Consequence. Chap. 2.

And hath not *present turning from our sins to God* much the advantage of either of the other Instances? Sinners have not only their outward Peace and Comforts; not their meer Life in jeopardy: but with the Body, their very Souls in desperate danger of Eternal Misery! For without this Turning *now* from Sin to God, they shall be turned by God to Hell for evermore *hereafter*; herein there is no remedy. Ps. 9. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 9. John 3. 3. &c. *Of what concernment then is this to men!* Which shall be manifested more distinctly,

1. As to the *Substance of the work* it Sub-self, *viz.* Real turning from Sin to God. stance.
I turned my feet unto, &c.

2. As to the *Circumstance of Time* Circum-for doing it: Presently and without stance. delay. *I made haste, and delayed not,* &c.

1. For the *Substance of the work*, 1 Sub- To turn from Sin to God is of the stance &c. greatest Importance unto Men, of any To turn from sin of the highest work in the World beside. Judge Conse- you hereof your selves; by the quence. *Numerous Texts of Scripture*, which require Proof by it;

Chap. 2^d it ; and by the *manifest and most weighty Arguments* that do urge it.

I Texts
of Scrip.

1. For Texts. Expect no more than Gleanings of the Harvest. *Ezek. 18. 30, 31. Repent, and turn your selves from all your Transgressions : so iniquity shall not be your ruine—Make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit : for why will you dye ?* Here is Repentance, and turning urged vehemently ; both by a *Promise* of the greatest Mercy, *so ruine shall be escaped* : and by a *Threat* of the most woful misery otherwise ; Death, (Temporal and Eternal) *must be the doom else* ; and that unavoidably. To the same purpose, but more pathetically, we find it managed, *ch. 33. 11. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his way and live ; turn ye ; (and again,) turn ye from your evil waies ; for why will you die ?* Here the same *Promise and Threat*, are both implied ; both in the beginning, and end of the verse. But *turning* is urg'd with greater earnestness, and again repeated ; to convince us of the Importance and necessity of our doing it ; as we have likewise the greatest encouragement

rage and spur thereunto ; by the
 Almighty's Oath ; that *sinners turning*
 will be *pleasing unto him*, and shall be
saving unto them. And as here the
 Promise and Threat are both made use
 of to enforce this weighty Duty : So
 elsewhere, sometimes 'tis back'd but
 with a single Promise ; and othertimes
 with a single Threat. Of the former
 kind is *Es. 59. 20. The Redeemer shall*
come out of Zion : and unto whom shall
 that choicest Blessing come ? *Unto*
them that turn from transgression. Of
 the latter is, *Pf. 7. 12. If the wicked*
turn not, he will whet his Sword : he
hath bent his bow, and made it ready.
He hath prepared for him the Instruments
of Death. 'Twould be a tedious thing,
 and I must transcribe a good part of
 the Holy Bible ; should I write down
 all passages to this purpose. Let it suf-
 fice to note ; that as this Doctrine was
 the chief string, whereon the Prophets
 harped of old ; witness, besides those
 mentioned, *Moses, Deut. 30. 9, 10 ;*
Jeremy, 3. 14 ; Hosea 14. 1, 2 ; Joel 2.
13 ; Zechary 1. 3. yea, all the rest by
 the Testimony of the Prophet *Jeremy,*
25. 4, 5 : so, *John the Baptist, Matt.*
3. 2. Our Saviour himself, *Matt. 4. 17 ;*

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Mark 1. 15; *Luke* 13. 3; and his Disciples, *Mark* 6. 12; *Acts* 3. 19, and 26. 18, 20, dwelt very much on the same subject.

Abundant Evidence of the great Importance of our *turning from our Sin to God*; so many Texts, like a Cloud of Witnesses; and all the Ministers of both the Testaments, by Gods Commission, so strictly insisting on it! Our Blessed Saviour's Practice concurring likewise therewithal.

2. Argument.

2: But let us also hear what weighty Arguments plead urgently for the same. These are some of them.

1. 'Tis the very end for which we have our Beings, and all the Mercies we enjoy.

2: 'Twas one of the greatest Errands Christ Jesus came into the World about; layd down his Life here, went back hence to Heaven, and sent his Gospel thence abroad the Earth upon.

3. This is the very business, which our Christian Profession doth necessarily engage us in.

4. And which the vile, and monstrous, and accursed complexion of Sin compelleth to.

5. Yea, and the ravishing Excellency of

of Holiness exacteth at our hands.

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6. To conclude, *Whereto we are obliged by the absolute and indispensable necessity thereof, for escaping Hell, and getting into Heaven.*

Surely, when these are all made good, (which will anon with Gods assistance, be performed sufficiently) that man will not believe, it is day at noon, who shall not be convinced, that *Turning from our Sin to God*, is a work of highest consequence to our Souls.

1. *Tis the very end for which we have* Arg. 1. *our Beings, and all the Mercies we enjoy.*

The plain meaning is : the very Reason why God made, preserveth, and blesteth us with all the Comforts whereof we are partakers, is ; *that we should serve him in Holiness and Righteousnes before him all our dayes.* And can there be a possibility of doing this ; if men shall live in sin, and turn not from it unto God ? Those that think so, pray let them draw the Sluce to stop the Waters ; prove Rebels to their Prince to do him service ; stab their Father at the Heart, to save his Life ! These means as fairly serve such ends, as living in sin ; tendeth to Gods service. Sin is nothing else, but truest vassalage to

Chap. 2. the Devil. And he is an open and professed Enemy unto God : Therefore not to turn from that, but to live therein; is not only to act the part of a sworn Drudge to Satan, but an implacable and open Enemy unto God. Now what reasonable Soul can be so Brutish, or rather Devilish, as to imagine, that the Almighty should be at such pains and cost, and care about the Sons of men ; only that they might be capable of doing him the curst displeasure, of being Rebels to himself, and Votaries to the Devil ? Did the great Creator *make thee*, Sinner ? Doth he daily some way or other *blefs* thee ; and for this wretched purpose ? Particularly,

I. Being. I. *We live, and move, and have our*
 * *Being In God, Acts 17. 28. And should it not be for him ?* Is it fitting, when the Potter hath with much labour, at great Expences, and with more curious Art, perfected his Vessels ; another then, without his leave, should have the honour, profit and service of them ? Will you judge it equal, that your Neighbour should plow and sow

* *Deum namque ire per omnes Terrasq; tractusq; maris, cælumq; profundum. Virg. Georg. 4.*

his own Field; and a stranger reap and carry of the Crop? Couldst thou forbear exclaiming of the high injustice in it, that thy self shouldst spend thy Time, and Labour, and Purse about a business; which, when 'tis brought unto maturity, thou wholly art bereaved of, by thine utter Enemy? Sinner, out of thine own Mouth shalt thou be judged! For thus thou servest God, by going on in thine Iniquity. For all that he hath expended on thee, from the apparent right that he hath in thee, what doth he gather from thee; but utter disappointment, and disservice by thee? Who goeth away with all the Advantage, but the Devil? Had Satan formed thee out of the dust; or had he breathed into thee the breath of Life; there had been some pretence for thy serving of him.

But since thou owest thy self entirely unto God: how equal is it, that thou pay thy service wholly to him; as 'tis most reasonable that he should expect it from thee? *God made all things, saith Solomon.* And *for himself*, he made them also, *Pro. 16. 4.* St. Paul tells us,

Chap. 2. *Of him, as Creator; through him, as Preserver; and therefore unto him, as their last end, and for his * meer service, All things are, Rom. 11. ult.* Consider, sinner with thy self. What needed God have troubled himself in making such a Creature as thou art? If one drop could sensibly increase the Ocean; and a twinkling Candle make addition unto the light of the Lamp of Heaven; to be sure, Infinite Fulness and Perfection receiveth no increase from thee; nor can do. Wherefore then did he not leave thee in thy first Principles of Dust and Clay? Or since he pleased to give existence to thee; why should he not have placed thee in the lowest, and vilest rank of Creatures? Might not a Brute, a Serpent, or a Toad have been thy Lot; would he have had it so? Could not the Artist have made a spitting-dish out of that matter, which he turns into a Cup for Wine or Cordials? And the Carpenter have left that piece for a Groundsil, which he frames and carves into a stately Lintel?

* *Facti & inspirati a Deo sumus non ut Calum videremus & solem, quod Anaxagoras putavit; sed ut Artificem solis & Cæli, Deum, purâ & integrâ mente coleremus.* Lactant. de ver cult. l. 6. c. 1.

But

But Divine Grace, and Bounty would have thee formed in Gods own *likeness*, and after his own *Image*, that thou mightest be his *Child*, and he thy *Father*. Yet after all, thou provest a Rebel to him, and listest thy self under his open Enemy! You that are Parents! Should any of your Children thus acquit themselves, and serve you so; would you not pronounce it a very monstrous, and unnatural Villany? Who but will say, the Souls of Children should abhor it? and the mention thereof should amaze them? Yet *Nathan's* words to *David* must be said to him that turneth not from Sin; *Thou art the man*: and thus thou dealest with thy *Maker*; and who is ready to approve himself a most tender Father to thee. Sirs, how light soever any of us may make of this Behaviour; the Majesty of Heaven and Earth seemeth astonished at the Observation of it. *Es. 1. 2. Hear, O ye Heavens, and give ear O Earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. What dismal Charge is coming, that hath such a frightful Preface to it? I have nourished and brought forth Children, and they have rebelled against me! A strange Pro-*

Chap. 2. *sopopeia* ! God makes appeal to Heaven and Earth, Inanimate Creatures, because sinful Men are utterly senseless ! Oh what a Prodigy then, what an apparent Monster, doth every Sinner make himself ! Not turning from his Sin to God ! And of what Importance is it therefore to quit this course, that we may answer the end for which God gave our Being to us.

2. Mercies 2. Besides, what heaps of Mercies doth God daily load you with ? The continuance of thy Reason, Senses, thy Limbs, and Health, and Liberty (tho many in the world, and alas *with you*, know how to value them, by the want of some thereof) thy supply of wants; deliverance from dangers; support in troubles; comfort of Relations and Friends; with * all other kindnesses God hath shewed to thee : have they not *Gratitude* and *Obedience* to thy Bountiful Benefactor in Capital Letters written on their Forehead ? Ought

* *Recordemur misericordiarum Dei, ut sic accendamus in ejus amorem. Revocemus ad memoriam bona quae tribuit nobis, quomodo in periculis constitutos clementer nos eripuit, nec unquam peccatis nostris, quo minus miseretur, vinci potuit : &c. Recogitemus quanta bona Deus fecit nobis non rogantibus, neque desiderantibus, imò recusantibus, &c. S. Bernh. de Inter. Dom. c. 9.*

not *Gods Goodness* towards thee (in so many instances thereof) lead thee to repentance towards him, *Rom. 2. 4*? Will you be so vile, as to recompence *Evil to him*, for his *Good to you*? Can you find in your Heart to be still sinful, when he findeth in his Heart to be so merciful; and not condemn yourselves for being such, and doing so? Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise! In the *parable of the Talents*; were they not bestowed, that those men that had them, should trade therewith for the use and benefit of their Master, from whom they did receive them, *Mat. 25. 15*? Do you not find the *Delinquent Servant* there condemned; not for squandering and wasting of his share, but non-improvement of the same unto the profit of his Lord, *v. 30*? Nay, you may see, that his being *sloathful and unprofitable*, makes him to be censur'd *Wicked*; *v. 30.* and *26.* And doth not all this plainly shew, what Obligations unto God, the mercies we receive from him do lay upon us? They call us to his diligent and faithful service; which is destroyed utterly by the serving Sin. Oh! What have they to answer for to God, who
so

Chap. 2. so abuse the Gifts received from him, as to make Weapons, therewith to fight against him ! Is Health and Liberty, peace and plenty, and thy other Mercies bestowed on thee ; to make thee more prompt and ready, more bold and desperate in the prosecution of thy Lusts ? This is plainly, to *receive from God, and lay out for the Devil !* An high provocation, to a jealous God ! See what resentment he hath of it, *Hof. 2. 8, 9. She * did not know,* that is, would not know, saith one ; would not acknowledge saith another ; *that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and multiplied her Silver and Gold ; which they prepared for Baal.* This is to take Gods pay, wherewith to serve his Enemy ! It followes therefore, that God will right himself, and *v. 18. he will be even with them ; none shall deliver her out of his hands.* Certain it is, that *To whomsoever much is given, of them much will be required, Luke 12. 48.* * *All men,* therefore having (somewhat, shall I say ?) indeed a great deal from the Lord in way of Mercy ; they all

* Nescire voluit. Oecol. Non agnovit. Pisc. * Neminem esse, ad quem non aliquid ex illo benignissimo fonte manaverit. Sen. de Ben. l. 4. c. 4.

become

become obliged, for that reason, faithfully to lay out themselves in his Obedience ; and therefore to turn from Sin to God, on the account of Mercies which they receive from him.

Thus you have seen the great Importance of this Duty ; in that, *it is the end for which we have our Being, and all the Mercies we enjoy from God,* which is the first Argument.

C H A P. III.

2. Arg. *One of Christs greatest Errands,*
 1. *Why he come hither.* 2. *Dyed here.*
 3. *From Heaven sent Ministers abroad the Earth.* 3. Arg. *Tis what our Christian Profession ingageth in ; particularly Baptism, and Holy Supper.*

2. **T**Was one of the greatest Errands Arg. 2.
Christ Jesus came into the World about ; laid down his Life here, went back hence to Heaven, and sent his Gospel thence abroad the world, upon. Now no man out of Bedlam, sure, will, or can once imagine, that all these great and marvellous things performed by the
 Son

Chap. 3. Son of God, were only for some slight and inconsiderable purpose. What! That the *second Person* in the Blessed Trinity should leave the Paradise of God, and come into this howling Wilderness; put off (as 'twere) his Robes of Majesty, and cloath himself with mortal Rags; leave the Society and Attendance of Saints and Angels, to converse with, and be worried by, meer Lyons, Bears, and Tygers, upon an Errand of none, or small importance! And being here, to suffer Hunger, Thirst, and Cold; to be despised, reproached, and persecuted; and at the last, with vilest scorn, and highest injury, to be apprehended, arraigned, and condemned to a most shameful, painful, and accursed Death upon the Cross; and all for little matters still! Lastly, that he should go back to Heaven, and send his Gospel thence abroad the world; setting up a *standing and perpetual Office of the Ministry*, to fill all parts of the Earth, and continue to the end of time; for calling upon Men to turn from Sin to God: who, rather than forgoe their work, must expose themselves to utmost Jeopardies, in point of State, and Liberty, and Life it self

self, (all which, many Thousands in the Ages past have therefore lost; and God only knoweth how soon the like again may happen) and yet the business to be thought of little Consequence! Doubtless, setting by all Fools and Madmen, the whole world besides, must needs conclude, *'Twas a design of the most great Importance, wheretō there was so great an Apparatus, or Preparation made by him, that is the Wisdom of God, as well as his Power.* Why? the whole Plot, in short, was this: * *To display Gods wonderful Grace, in accepting of a Ransome which himself found out; whereby Men might be turned from their sin; God might forgive, and save their Souls.*

How great an Interest then in all these works of wonder think we, had turning men from Sin to God?

But let the Holy Scripture answer for this matter, and unto each particular,

I. Touching *Christs coming hither*: I. v Why
If the blessed *Paul* be asked about it; *Christ came hither.*

* *Nulla causa fuit veniendi Christo, nisi peccatores salvos facere. Tolle morbos, tolle vulnera; & nulla causa est medicina. Non enim de caelo ad terram merita nostra sed peccata duxerunt. Aug. de verb. Apost. Serm. 8, and 9.*

his

Chap. 3. his answer is, * *He came into the world to save sinners*; 1 Tim. 1. 15. If the enquiry be carried further; came he to save all kind of Sinners, or only some? And what kind of Sinners were they? Not the *Impenitent*, and *Unconverted*, who will continue in their wickedness; but those and all of them that turn; howsoever vile before they were; although as bad, as the very worst; such as my self, a Blasphemer, Persecutor, &c. of whom I am chief, saith he. Thus he resolves that case: And plain it is; that the Apostle could never mean it of any others. For, the Salvation of Sinners, *so continuing*, is impossible in the nature of the thing. Forasmuch as the injoyment of God, wherein the top of Salvation doth consist, is no more competent to an *Unholy Soul*; than partaking of the light of the Sun, is to an *Eye stark-blind*. Besides, *to speak it*, were absurd even to a Contradiction. Because Salvation is as well, and in the first place too, from *Sin* now, as from *Hell* hereafter. And the Son of God was called *Jesus* at his birth, (which is a Saviour) for that, *He should save his*

* Hinc colligunt Theologi, Christum non fuisse venturum, si homo non peccasset. Est. in loc.

people from their sins, *Matt. 1. 21.* And Chap. 3. that must needs intend the Power, as well as Guilt; the Dominion, as well as the Damnation of them: or else he had not been a compleat, and perfect Saviour. And indeed our Blessed Saviour tells us himself, that this was his great Errand hither; and the Apostle will take it well, to have his words expounded by his Masters. For saith Christ, *I came to call sinners to Repentance, Matt. 9. 13.* And that turning from Sin to God in future Holy Obedience, is Essential unto true Repentance, the Apostles Preaching doth assure us, *Acts 26. 20.* I shewed to Jews, and Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, (that is from Sin) and do works meet for Repentance. This point therefore shall be concluded with that one Testimony more of S. John Ep. 1. c. 3. 8. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested; that he might * destroy the works of the Devil: and they are Sins John 8. 41. So that, should not men be turned from their Sins to God, the Son of God would meet with utter disappointment in his end of coming hither.

* *ἀνεῷξεν* est destruere, ut John 2. 19. 2 Pet. 3. 10, 11, 12. Grot.

Chap. 3:
2. Why
Christ
dyed
here.

2. *For his dying here,* One of the great Reasons of that likewise was, for *turning men from Sin.* 'Tis thankfully acknowledged, as well as readily granted; that he made himself a Sacrifice for Sin, to satisfy Divine Justice,* and reconcile us unto God, by dying in our *Stead*, as well as for our *Good*: but it must be affirmed also; that he *hereby* intended to purge us from our Sins, as well as get us pardon of them. Therefore we read, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from* * *all Iniquity.* And who can question, but here is meant, even from the Power, as well as Guilt thereof? If it were doubtful yet; the next words make it certain: *And purifie to himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14.* 'Tis dreadful deceit, and will prove damnable in the issue; For men to think Christ gave himself for them, to save them hereafter, if they are not sanctified here. His purpose being, so by his Death to redeem them from their Sins; that they might be a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good

* *A peccati servitute, quæ consistebat in duobus, affectu, & reatu. Pol. Syn. Finis redemptionis est studium pie & recte vivendi. Calv. in loc.*

works. And remember; *what God Chap. 3.*
hath joyned together, viz. (Sanctification
 and Salvation) *wo beto them, whose vain*
and wicked thoughts shall put the same
asunder. Needs there more proof of
 this? Then once more ask the same
 Apostle: *Why did Christ dye for all;* as
 his Expression is, 2 Cor. 5. 15? And
 he will answer: The very end there-
 of was, *That they which live should not*
henceforth live unto themselves, but unto
him that dyed for them, and rose again.
 And is not this the same with, *That*
they should not live in Sin; but turn-
ing from it, walk in Holiness and Righ-
teousness all their days?

And in the last place; About his giv-
 ing gifts to Men from Heaven; when
 he ordained the standing Office of the Mi-
 nistry (Eph. 4. 8, 11, &c.): was it not
 for the very end and purpose we are
 speaking of; To turn men from their
 Sins to God? What Capital Letters is
 this written in, Acts 3. ult. *Unto you*
first (meaning the Jews, as the Gentiles
 afterwards) *God having raised up his Son*
Jesus, sent him to bless you, (sent him; under-
stand, in his Own, the Ministry of the A-
postles, and Presbyters: and to bless you;
how?) in turning away every one of you
 D from

3. VVhy
 Christ
 gave gifts
 from Hea-
 ven, and
 sends his
 Ministers.

Chap. 3. *from his Iniquities.* This is Christs[†] Blessing from Heaven, to send his *Ministers*, who by his Gospel, and the Holy Spirit accompanying that, may turn Men from their Sin to God. And for us *Gentile Sinners*, more particularly, and expressly, the Apostle Paul received commission; *To open our Eyes, to turn us from darkness to light, and from the † power of Satan unto God: that so, we might receive the forgiveness of our Sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by Faith in Christ, Act. 26. 17, 18.* What can be plainer? To conclude; This is the Design of the Gospel towards both Jew, and Gentile, wheresoever the Ministers thereof shall Preach it; *To teach men, that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts; that is, eschewing all violations both of the first and second Table: They should live soberly, towards themselves; righteously towards their Neighbour; and Godly in this world, towards the Majesty of Heaven and Earth, Tit. 2. 12.*

* *Observandum, finem ministerii verbi Dei esse, ut convertatur populus ad Deum suum. Bulling. in Luc. 1. 16. † Sic vocat Idololatriam, & omnia vitia. Grot. & Ham. ap. Pol. Syn.*

And is not this *Effectual Turning from* Chap. 3.
our sin? And of what importance is it
then unto us!

3. *It is the very business, which our* Arg. 3.
Christian Profession doth necessarily en-
gage us in. Do we not all own our
selves *Retainers* unto Jesus Christ; Have
we not his *Livery* on us; Are we not
called by his Holy Name: *Christians*,
from *Christ*? And doth not this oblige
us against all Sin, and to Obedience
unto his Holy Will? What? should a
Servant strive against his Master: and
a Royallist fight against his King? This
were absurd; even unto villany, in the
highest pitch thereof! Why, Sirs
Christianity, the Religion we are all
entred into, and have taken up the
Profession of, is at the most perfect
Enmity with all Sin and Wickedness, and
for the strictest Holiness, of any in the
World beside. And the founder there-
of did not only give the exactest Rules
and Precepts of an Holy Life; but
was himself the most Absolute Presi-
dent, and most Unparalleled Example
of the practice of the same. For he did
no sin, neither was guile ever found in
in his Mouth, 1 Pet. 2. 22. Now for

Chap. 3. any Person to enter his Name with Christ, and pretend to be a Servant, Follower, and Disciple unto him, and live the while in sin and wickedness; is both at once, to render himself a cursed Hypocrite; and by his practice to give a ful-mouth'd Lye unto his own profession. This is to bring up Judas from the dead again, and act his part afresh: *kiss thy Master, and betray him!* Such men are most certainly, no more the true Disciples of our Blessed Lord, than was that monstrous Traytor! Therefore said the Saviour of the World; *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit*; not Fruit of wickedness, but of righteousness: so shall ye be my Disciples; and upon none other Terms in the world, *John 15. 8.* If any of you continue in sin, whatever thoughts you may have of your selves, and howsoever the world may take you; you are just such Real Christians, as dead Carcases are Living Men; and nothing better. You say of Pictures, That's *Alexander*; there's *Cesar*; and here is *Henry* the Eighth, or so. But all this while, they are but Lifeless, representations of those Great Personages. Alas! Those that are not
turn-

turned from their Sin ; tho you may call them *Believers, Saints, or Christians* : God doth the while both know, and reckon them to be, but sorry shadows of those excellent Persons. *True Christianity* makes *men truly Holy*. And to profess the same is by the Founders *Law and Life*, to bid farewell to Sin, and enter a Protest against Iniquity. Therefore in that famous place of *2 Tim. 2. 19.* 'tis written, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* : that is, professeth himself belonging to him, in any, tho the meanest Capacity of one of his Followers. *Let him depart from iniquity* ; have nothing to do with Sin ; but be a perfect Separatist from that ; however, he may stand obliged to converse with Sinners. This is that, which our Christian Profession doth engage us in : and without a faithful standing whereunto, All other Priviledges, Pretensions, and Claims that Men can make, will prove of no Spiritual and saving use, and benefit to them.

It hath pleased the *Author* of our Religion to institute *Two solemn sacred Rites*, to distinguish his Disciples from the Followers of all, or any other Sects

Chap. 3. in the World. And Both of them are, *in their natures*, further Engagements against Sin, and to the service of himself in Holiness. These are *Baptism*, and the *Holy Supper*.

X

I. Baptism I. *Baptism* is the solemn Admission of us into Christs Holy Service, the listing of us under his sacred Banner. And in the same, we make a Vow to fight against the Devil, World, and Flesh; and to continue faithful to the Captain of our Salvation, in that Holy Quarrel. And is not this for *Holiness*, and against *Iniquity*? Saith not the Apostle, *so many of us as were baptized *into Jesus Christ*, (that is, by Baptism did ingage our selves to take Christ Jesus for our Saviour, Lord, and Teacher) *were baptized into his Death*? Meaning, were baptized into a Conformity to his Death: that, as when he dyed, and lay under Earth, 'twas *unto sin*, (v. 10. here); viz. to destroy its *Damning Power* over us: so we being baptized, and under Water, profess to aim at the Destruction of its *Reigning*

* Οὗτος ὁ ὁ σώζεις τὸν Χριστὸν, &c. VWhat the Cross and Grave were to Christ; that Baptism is to us—He Dyed and was Buried to the Flesh; but we are both to Sin. S. Chrys. in loc. Homil. 10.

Power in us. Therefore he adds, *We* Chap. 3.
are buryed with him by Baptism into
Death; Water upon us, doth answer
Earth on him; and both denote a Bu-
ryal, which follows after Death: that as
Christ was raised from the Dead by the
Glory of the Father, even so we should
walk in newness of Life; having now
done with Sin, according to our so-
lemn Profession made by Baptism; to
be continually making Progress, and
going forward, which is meant by
walking, in Holy Obedience; which is
the newness of Life spoken of: Rom. 6.
3, 4. And mark the Preface to all this.
 The Apostle wonders that *Baptized*
Christians, should any of them be un-
 acquainted with the *Nature*, and *End*
 of their Baptism; which is for *Cove-*
nanting with Jesus Christ against Iniqui-
ty, and for *Holiness*: know ye not,
saieth he; that the case is so? Which
 being so, what Trayterous, and Sa-
 crilegious Perjury may be found
 amongst Thousands, called Christians;
 and who are apt enough to glory of
 their *Baptism* too! But they are false
 notoriously; and utterly above all
 possibility of excuse to be made for
 them. Thus to swear Allegiance un-


Chap. 3. to *Jesus Christ*, wear his Colours, and march under his Ensign ; yet, by living in open sin and wickedness, to serve his Enemy, and fight against him ! O ! tremble at the thoughts hereof, ye Baptized Sinners !

2. Holy
Supper.

2. The *Holy Supper* is the Repetition, and further Confirmation of our Baptismal Vow. For as often as we partake thereof, so often do we renew our Engagement unto *Jesus Christ*, to continue * Loyal to him, against all works of wickedness ; their grand Patrone, and his chief Enemy Satan. I grant indeed that in this Holy Institution, there is especial Grace and Mercy, from the God thereof, exhibited and conveyed to Persons fitly qualified and disposed to receive the same : which very thing is to be affirmed likewise, of the Other, spoken of but now : but that lyeth on the Part of God : and we, for ours, in *this*, as well as that, do oblige our selves against Iniquity ; as aforesaid. Therefore the Apostle, in 1 Cor. 10. 21. saith, *Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils : ye cannot be partakers*

* Quo sacramento predicatur nostrum aliud Votum maximum, quo nos vocimus in Christo esse mansuetos.
Aug. Ep. 59.

of the Lords Table, and of the Table of Chap. 3.
Devils. Ye cannot; that is, ye cannot
honestly, and with good Conscience; ye
are engaged unto the contrary; As
Acts. 4. 20. The very Nature of this
Sacrament further obligeth you to Je-
sus Christ; how can you possibly then
do homage to his Enemy? And if there-
by we tye our selves more strictly
against the Devils service; to be sure,
we must, by the same, against all sin;
which is nothing else but Satans Vassa-
lage. Thus Both the Sacraments, and
our Profession of Christianity, necessa-
rily ingage us against Iniquity. Of
what importance is it then to turn
from sin to God!



C H A P. IV.

4. Arg. *The vile, monstrous and accursed Complexion of Sin compels hereto. It's Nature, Original, Behaviour towards the Creator and Creature, Unreasonable, and Reasonable, and the Issue thereof, in punishment intollerable, universal, and eternal.*

Arg. 4.

4. **T**urning from sin to God, is what the *Vile, and Monstrous, and Accursed Complexion of sin compelleth to*; and therefore 'tis of great Importance so to do. When 'tis considered seriously *what an Abomination Sin is*; who can avoid Conviction of the grand concernment to avoid the same with all his might? It is undoubtedly, the only *None-such for Universal Baseness and Abhorrency, in all the World!* And there is not, certainly, such another *frightful peece of cursedness* within the whole compass of Nature! Not only my sorry Rhetorick is deficient hugely for full expression of the horror in it; but I am perswaded an *Eloquent Essay, or most Learned Paul, could hardly do it.* To offer what we can do

do in the case; let us, I pray, take notice, more particularly; of the *Nature, Original, Behaviour, and Issue* of the same. Whereby we shall in a plain and familiar way resolve these 4 Questions, which may be aptly made concerning it; 1. What it is? 2. Whence it came hither? 3. How it carries it self here? And 4. Whether it goes from hence again?

1. *What Sin is?* And be it what it will, or can be: we are right well assured, 'tis none of Gods Creation. Whatever he made, being every thing very good, *Gen. 1. 31.* but this, *exceeding Evil*. It can't be therefore of the works of his hands: nor hath he ought to do therewith; save in a *wise Permission*, and *righteous Punishment* of the same. The Apostle *James* straitly forbiddeth any man to say, when he is tempted; unto sin, that is; that he is tempted of God: For *God is not tempted with evil* himself: nor tempteth he any man thereunto: *James 1. 13.* No, God hath no such liking to it; his very Nature is abhorrent from it. *Thou art of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and canst not look upon Iniquity*, saith the Prophet *Habakkuk* unto God, *ch. 1. 13.* Do we not per-

1. Sins
Nature;
what 'tis,

Chap. 4. perceive hereby an utter Antipathy in the *Holy One*, against Iniquity! Can it be worse with any of us, against *that thing*, we hate most mortally? No Toad or Serpent, no Carrion or Uncleanneſs, is to us ſo lothſome. He *can't endure the very ſight of it!* And hath not God promulged * *Laws ſevereſt Ones*, againſt the very Life, and Being of all ſin in the World? Hath he not backed them with the *Threats* of everlaſting Punishment? And did he not bruise, and wound, and put to Death his only begotten, and dearly beloved Son, when he only bare the Sins of others, and was guiltleſs in himſelf? Which being done *unto the green Tree*, what may be expected towards the *dry one*? Abundant proof, that Sin could never come from * God; and that he hath no hand therein. Whoever dareth then the attempt, of making God the Author of Iniquity; gets only thiſthereby, to make himſelf the

* *Nec idem habendus eſt delicti autor, qui invenitur interdictor, immo & condemnator. Tert. adv. Marc. l. 2. c. 9. ad fin. * Detestanda, & abominanda, opinio eſt, quæ Deum cujuſquam male voluntatis aut male actionis, credit autorem. S. Aug. Ad Art. ſibi, &c. Art. 10.*

Author of accursed Blasphemy.

Why, the very nature of *sin* lyeth precisely in a contrariety to Gods Holy Nature (as you have heard); and violation of his Holy Law, as S. John teacheth you. *sin is the Transgression of the Law*, 1 John 3. 4. There is nothing better to be found therein: and so it hath not any Grain, or Sand of Good at all about it. 'Tis wholly Evil: and therefore worse than the very * Devil himself. As bad as he is, morally; yet naturally he is Gods Creature; and so far Good. Sin is not that; but contrariety to him, and destructive of his works; where ever it be found. 'Tis from elsewhere, as we shall hear.

2. Whence it came hither? 'Tis of no Divine Original, we have seen already. The Pedigree thereof is from elsewhere to be derived. The plain Truth is, we must say of *Sin*, as our Saviour said to the Jews, for the sake of that: It is from beneath; from its Father the Devil, John 8. 23. 44. 'Tis not an * Heavenly,

2. Original:
whence
came.

* Ἦν τὴν δαιμονος χαλεπωτέραν ἐκβαλόντων αἰμαρτίαν. Chryl. Hom. 28. in Rom. 15. *Malum vel malitia non est a Deo creata, sed a Diabolo inventa, qui & ipse bonus a Deo creatus est.* Aug. de Eccles. dogm.

but

Chap. 4. but an *Hellish Off-spring*. Therefore the Sinners, spoken of in that very Text, v. 41. are said to *do the deeds of their Father*; that is, the works of the Devil: and v. 44, *the lusts of your Father*, Satan, ye will do: both which respect the *Sins*, they did, and would commit. So that *all Iniquity* is the meer smoak of the bottomless Pit; the very Spawn of Hell; and child of the Devil. I confess indeed, *S. Paul* saith, *By one man, sin entred into the World*, *Rom. 5. 12*. But 'tis not meant, that he was *first Author* of it: it only came from him at second hand. For though by him it entred into the World; how I pray you, did it enter into Him? Whence did he get it? And where took he the Mortal Infection? The account is truly given by the *Mother of all Living*, *Gen. 3. 13*. *The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat*. Which was, the * Devil and Satan, *that old serpent, which deceiveth the whole World*. *Revel. 12. 8*.

Ah sinners! Have you these apprehensions in your minds, when you

* *Sicut in bonis operibus perfectior est Deus—Sic in malis & peccatis semina nostra sunt incentiva, & perfectio Diaboli*. *S. Hierom. contr. Jovin. l. 2. c. 32.*

harbour vile and sinful *Thoughts* with- Chap. 6
in your Breasts; when corrupt and
filthy Communication goeth out
of your Mouths; when works of
darkness are your open and daily prac-
tices? Do you then consider with your
selves, that you are imbracing the ve-
ry Imps of Hell; in dalliance with
the Devils Darlings; and caressing
with the Brood of the bottomless Pit?
Surely, 'twould make you quit the
Company, and startle at the first ap-
pearance of them; most certainly make
their presence most uneasie, and a bur-
den insupportable to you! Doubtless
you must shun them then, as you would
do him that sent them, and from whom
they come; that is, the *Devil*. The
Errand must be very bad, they go up-
on, who are sent by such a Master.

3. What doth it here? So rude, and 3. Beha-
vile is its *Behaviour*; and so numerous viour;
are the Instances of the same; that it what
requires a larger far Discourse, than doth
both the former Questions needed, to here.
give a tolerable account thereof. Let
us therefore, and as briefly as the case
will bear, observe the Carriage there-
of Towards, 1. The Creator, 2. The
Creature. 1. To-

Chap. 4: **1. To-** **ward the** **Creator.** **1. Towards the Creator.** Even here, it acts at a rate insufferable; and is most vile above all Expression. I shall, in short but note 3 things about it. 1. 'Tis Rebellion against him; 2. 'Twould be Destruction of him; 3. And therefore must be a burden to him, not to be endured by him.

1. 'Tis
Rebellion
against
him.

1. 'Tis Rebellion against him. The past discourses do fairly intimate, that the very Life and Soul of sin doth lye herein, And therefore every Impenitent sinner is a *Convicted Traytor*, and the worst of *such*. Being guilty of *High Treason* against the *Highest Majesty* of Heaven and Earth. Treason is accounted, and justly too, a frightful villany, towards a Mortal Prince. What is it then to the Immortal God! And how will sinners now appear, that stand indited, and are convicted of this dreadful Guilt? They bid defiance, take up Armes, and make open War against the God of Heaven! This is the reason that they are so often called *Enemies unto God*, in Holy Scripture. See *Pf. 37. 20.* and *68. 1, 2, 21.* and *98. 9, &c. Rom. 5. 10. Col. 1. 21, &c.* And this Enmity is rooted in their very Hearts too, *Rom. 8. 7.* *For the carnal Mind is Enmity against God:*

God: 'tis not subject to the Law of God ; Chap. 4.
 neither indeed can be : unless it shall be,
 by Grace, Converted and Renewed.
 Their Lives proclaim the language of
 those * Rebels, Luk. 19. 13. *We will
 not have this Man* (the Blessed Jesus)
to Reign over us. And they are confederate
 against the Lord, and against
 his Christ, as those that said, *Let us
 break their bands asunder, and cast away
 their cords from us,* Psal. 2. 3. Sinners,
 you are loath to think thus hardly of
 your selves. We know, mens guilt
 will prompt them now to say, as it
 hath done heretofore : *This is an hard
 saying, who can bear it ?* But that very
 sin of yours, which is High Treason
 against God ; makes you also Traytors
 to your own Souls. Be but once seri-
 ously turned from it ; and your thoughts
 about it will be Turned also : you'l
 quickly change your Minds, and no
 longer keep the Plea, *Not Guilty,* in
 your Mouthes. Then will you hum-
 bly, and frankly too, confess with the
 Holy Prophet, Dan. 9. 5. *We have sin-
 ned, and committed iniquity, and * have*

* *Nolumus* : stat pro ratione voluntas. Grot. * *Homi-
 nes, quomvis Sanctissimi, sue rebellionis in Deum sunt
 Conscii.* Jun. in loc.

Chap. 4.

done wickedly, and HAVE REBELLED : how ? Even by departing from Gods Precepts, and from his Judgments. Thus of sins carriage towards God, in the first respect.

2. Would
be de-
struction
of him.

2. *'Would be Destruction of him.* Less cannot be, (whatever men think) in the aim of sin. Rebellion against Mortal Princes hath no lower Tendency. Need we, in this Case, consult the stories of Forreign Countries ; or indeed our own ? Let all alone of that kind, any where. Ask but your selves, whether *Truest, and Loyal Love*, will not lay out its utmost Service, for both Life and Comfort of the Party so Beloved : and whether *perfect Hatred*, be not as diligent, to the highest mischief of the Person hated ? What can be thought of *Wicked Men* ? Do they not rise up against the Crown and Dignity : would they not attaque the Life of the King of Kings (were it within their reach) : When our *Saviour* saith, of such among the *Jews*, *They hated both himself and his Father too*, Joh. 15. 24. and his Apostle, from him, of their like among the Heathens ; that they are *Haters of God*, Rom. 1. 30 ? Who can imagine that sin falls short at all, of a design

design therein to destroy God? 'Tis Chap. 4:
true indeed, we do not meet with so
much Hell on Earth; as for a wicked
Man to speak it with his Mouth; He
would destroy the Almighty God! But
there are two other waies of speaking
according to the Scripture: and Both
of them, the sinner dareth to make use
of against the *very Being of God*. One
is, *in the Heart*: and this *Hannah* used,
when her voice was not heard, 1 Sam.
1. 13. What then is *there* the language
of a Wicked Man? *There is no God*,
Psal. 14. 1. and 53. 1. 'Tis written;
The *Fool saith thus*: that is the Impe-
nitent sinner; who is the rankest *Fool*,
or *Madman* rather, in the World. And
tho' he dare not say this openly; and
whether he can really perswade him-
self so, or not; 'tis still his Wish, and
he would do his Best to compass it;
That there were no God to govern Af-
fairs here, and call him to a reckoning
hereafter. The Other way of speak-
ing is, *by the life*. And St. Paul saith
of the Ungodly, Tit. 1. 16. *They pro-
fess they know God*: a Sovereign Being,
that made, and keepeth; that Ruleth,
and will surely Judge the World at
last: *but in works they deny him*. Their

Chap. 4. Life, not only gives a perfect contradiction to their own Lips ; but would were it able, make a * Nullity of the very Deity. There's a second Instance of sins behaviour towards God !

3. Is an
unindura-
ble Bur-
den to
him.

3. *Lastly, Therefore Sin must be a Burden to him, not to be endured by him.* It is, indeed, the Only Thing in all the World, that *troubleth and wearieth God.* His Gracious Majesty, 'tis true, is *grieved* for the Miseries sinners bring upon themselves ; but their sins that bring those Miseries, they so afflict him, as to *tire him.* We find in *Isa. i. 13, 14,* that the Almighty groweth weary of his own Appointments ; they were performed in so ungodly a manner, by his own, but a very naughty, People. Therefore he pronounceth *It is Iniquity, even the solemn meeting ;* for Religious purpose. And the *New Moons,* and *appointed Feasts* (of his own Institution) his Soul *hated ; they were a trouble to him, he was weary to bear them.* If *sin,* that cleaveth to the bad performance of *Gods own Commands,* become so grievous to him ; what shall we think of *That,* which lieth in practice

* *Quotiescunque vincimur vitiis atque peccatis, toties Deum negamus.* Anselm in loc.

of the *Things point-blank forbidden* by him? How greatly offensive will that prove? As for Example; If *he* be such a Burden to the Lord, that hears, and reads, and prayes, and the like; but not with that due Devotion, wherewith he ought to do those holy Works; not with an holy heavenly Heart and Life, that is: What is their Case, and how uneasie are *They* unto him, who, instead of being so employed, are wholly given unto Drunkenness, Whoredom, Oathes and Blasphemies, with other Impieties, as their daily Practices? Doubtless such Sinners must put the Holy One to like disquiet, that the Old World did, *When it repented the Lord, that he had made Man; and it grieved him at his heart,* Gen. 6. 6. What an uncontroulable Proof is it, that sin is an *Insufferable Offence* unto him; when God shall tell the sinners, that *he is pressed under them* (in their sinful Courses) as a *Cart is pressed, that is full of sheaves*? This is the similitude of the Prophet *Amos* 2. 13. in language suitable to his former Calling, of a *Shepherd*, that is. Which another of an higher Extract, and Education, expresseth in a smother Dialect, but

Chap. 4. with as rough an issue altogether; I
 * conceive. *You have made me to serve
 with your Sins; and have wearied me with
 your Iniquities*; is God's complaint by
Isaiah, 43. 24. Sufficient Notice; what
 a Burden sin is unto him: and thereby
 how it carrieth it self towards the Cre-
 ator! And that makes up such an In-
 formation, *What sin doth here*; as can-
 not but convince us of its horrible vile-
 ness; and consequently of the Great
Importance of Turning from it. Which
 will be yet more full and plain, when
 we have seen its carriage.

2. To-
wards
the Crea-
ture.

1. Unrea-
sonable.

2. Towards the Creature: both the
Unreasonable, and the *Reasonable*;
 chiefly.

1. For the *Unreasonable Creature*.
 Sin brought the Curse of God upon
 the Earth, *Gen. 3. 17, 18.* As *Thorns*
 and *Thistles*; so, who can doubt, but
 * *Noysome Vapours, Infectious Aires,*
Venemous Poysons, and whatsoever else

* *Laboravi sustinens; & nequaquam ultra ferre te pos-
 sum.* S. Hieron. in loc. * *Cadente homine quem consi-
 cuerat Dominus dominum domus sue, & principem omnis
 possessionis sue, tota simul hereditas corrupta est. Inde
 distemperatus aer, terra in operibus Ade maledicta, &
 omnia subdita vanitati.* Bernh. in Vig. 12, Domini.
 Serm. 2.

is *mischievous* in the whole Creation, oweth its Original unto *sin*? Seemeth not that Excellent Prosopopeia of the *Blessed Apostle*, to dilate upon this Point of Doctrine? When *Rom. 8. 19, 20, &c.* he saith, *The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God. The Creature was made subject to vanity. Shall be delivered from the bondage of Corruption. Wherefore the whole Creation groaneth and travelleth together untill now.* There is, most certainly, a time approaching; when all the Decayes, Corruptions, and Changes, whereto the Creature is obnoxious, by reason of its bondage under sin, shall be no more. Therefore all the misery poor Bruites are subject to; and all the Evils in the World, besides, are justly to be imputed unto sin. And *what a Plague is This!*

2. But for the *Reasonable*, specially. 2. Reasonable. Sin writeth nothing else, but Bloud, and Wounds, and Death towards That. I shall not insist upon that havock which it made among the *Angels* that fell thereby. It is well known, that sin hath tumbled them out of Heaven into that Bottomless Pit; where Chains, and Blackness of Darkness,

Chap. 4. are reserved for them to a sad Eternity. 'Twill be sufficient now to lay to heart what mischief *It* hath done to *men on Earth*. And briefly that in these three Particulars,

In three
Particul.

1. It hath degraded and debased Man.
2. Puts Enmity 'twixt God and Him.
3. Curseth all his Blessings to him.

1. De-
grades &
debaseth
him.

1. Sin hath *degraded* Man from that Noble State, wherein God had created, and placed him at first. He is thereby dismounted from his Throne ; and and cast upon the Dunghill by the same. He is driven from his * Royal Pallace, and made a Vagabond on the Earth. Paradise will hold him now no longer ; and a flaming Sword doth keep him from returning thither any more, *Gen. 3. 24.* And for his *Soul*, it

* *Magna prorsus dissimilitudo, de paradiso ad infernum, & de Angelo ad Jumentum, de Deo ad Diabolum ! Excranda conversio ; gloriam in miseriam, vitam in pugnam, perpetuâ captivitate convertere ! Maledicta descensio, de divitiis ad paupertatem, de libertate ad servitutem, & de requie ad laborem descendere ! Bernh. Sermon. de 5. Negot. & 5. Region.*

is no more that Heavenly Peece, it Chap. 4.
 sometimes was. All is debased there ;
 and a most dismal change, Iniquity
 hath made upon it ! It's Gold, is *now*
 meer Brass ! And Silver, very Dross !
 'Twas once a Beauty, and resembled
 God ; his Image was so lively drawn
 upon it ! 'Tis now as Black, and Foul,
 as Hell : and by its Sin, become the
 very Picture of the Devil ! What mid-
 night Darkness lodgeth in the *Mind* ?
 What curst Rebellion is seated in the
Heart, or *Will* ? Yea, what vilest Va-
 nity and Disorder in *all the Affections* ?
 Doth not an *holy Prophet* complain, that
 he was *shapen in Iniquity*, as well as *con-*
ceived * *in sin*, Psal. 51. 5. ? Doth not
 a Blessed Apostle acknowledge, and
 profess, that *nothing good dwelt in his*
Flesh, Rom. 7. 18. ? What Sinner in
 the World, now living, can think bet-
 ter of himself, with common Modesty ?
 Ah ! the violent Inclinations in us na-
 turally to *All Evil* ! The utter aver-
 sation from all *spiritual Good* ! How like
 to Tinder, or rather unto Gunpowder
 are we ; to be all in Flames, when any

* *Vitiis nemo sine nascitur, optimus ille Qui minimis*
urgetur. Horat. Ser. lib. 1. Sat. 3.

Chap. 4. spark of a sinful Temptation lighteth on us? When on the other hand, neither Counsels of *Friends*, nor Commands of *Christ*, not Judgments of *God*, nor Convictions of *Conscience* thence arising, give *any lively motion* to the pursuit of Holiness; till Grace comes down from Heaven upon him, puts life into him, and in the Gospel Language, (*Luk. 14. 23.*) *compels* him thereunto. Thus is the Soul of Man *degenerated; here's the debasing of it; these are the sad Effects of sin upon it. Whereby, the sinners are Cashiered of their former Dignity; and their Honour is laid in the very Dust! They are not only oftentimes, in *holy Scriptures*, compared to the *Beasts*: but are frequently called *Brutish*, there: *Psal. 94. 8.* and *92. 6.* and *49. 10. &c.* And though they may attain the highest Honour here; yet (wanting Grace) they are said, *To be like the Beasts that Perish*, *Psal. 49. 12.*

* *Prævitæ simul atque animum attigit; affligit, atque dejicit: implet dolore, laments, mæstitiâ, penitentiâ hominem. Plut. An Vitiol. ad infelic. suffic.*

2. Sin puts enmity betwixt God and the Sinner. There is, hereby, a mortal Feud, and quarrel between them. He (*unhappy Wretch!*) becomes an * Enemy unto God; and maketh God be so to him. How sin behaveth it self to the Majesty of Heaven, you have heard already: and therefore need not, now, be told of the Affronts, and Injuries it puts upon, and doth unto him. But what Name is bad enough for *those*, whose business 'tis to set at variance Dearest Friends, and next Relations? We will presently say, they are the Firebrands of Hell, that do so. What shall we think of *sin*; the *Cursed makebate* betwixt Heaven and Earth! Behold the Monster! Isa. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have separated betwixt you and your God*—. Do we not find, how bad our pettite Separations 'twixt one another in this Church and Kingdom are? Have we not sadly felt a Cruel Enemy almost got wholly in, at the the Breaches we our selves have made? *Thank sin for all!* That first, makes

Chap. 4.
Puts En-
mity be-
twixt God
and him.

* Οὐ δ' ἐνεῖναι μόνον ἐξ ὁμοῦ &c. Non enim soli Inimici sunt Infideles, & Judæi: quin etiam isti, qui vitâ immundâ pleni sunt, &c. S. Chrys. in Hebr. 10. Rom. 18.

Chap. 4. separation betwixt God and us; and then, betwixt One another. And tho' this Common danger should be scaped: a worser cannot; except the Breach be made up between our Souls and God. Sin hath brought it; and will keep it; if we keep that. *God, or It, must of necessity be parted with.* I have already shewed you by many Scriptures, that sinners are Gods Enemies. And he justly payeth them in their own Coyn, Psal. 5. 5. *The foolish shall not stand in (Gods) sight.* And we heard before, that sinners are the grand Fooles of the World. If they shall not stand in the sight of God, 'tis a certain Argument, that he cannot abide them, then. No, that he cannot: for it follows there, *Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity.* Let mens Qualities, or Conditions, either in Church or State, be what they will, or can; *God is no respecter of Persons*, on those respects; if they be *workers of Iniquity*, make that their Trade and Business, he is not for them, but *against them* heartily; hath *hatred* for them. And, Sirs, to be the Object of *Gods Hatred*; how frightful is it! Who, in his Wits, but would rather choose to have all the
World

World against him, than God alone? Chap. 4.

If there were no resistance to be made against all men; if none escaping from them; the worst that they could do, were to inflict a Temporal Death. But now, *One stroak* of Gods hand, *One word* of his Mouth; nay *One frown* of his Face is able to sink the whole Earth to Hell for evermore! What must the Object of his Hatred undergo! what must the *unrepenting sinner* suffer! Against whom *God whets his Sword; bends his Bow, and prepareth the instruments of Death*, Psal. 7. 12, 13!

3. Lastly, *It Curseth all his blessings* ^{3. Curseth his Blessings.} *to him.* Whatsoever Good a sinner hath; sin, like to poyson dropt therein, * infecteth and corrupteth all. *Within himself*: it turns his *wisdom* into folly, his *strength* to weakness, and his *life* to death at last. And whilst he liveth; 'tis but to * Satans service, and the further mischief of his Immortal soul. *Unto every Good work, he is a reprobate*, as as the Apostle saith, *Tit. 1. 16.* For, *without him: spiritual Blessings*, the Word and Ordinances; tho in their

* Nihil potest ad malos pervenire quod profit; immò nihil quod non noceat. Sen. de Ben. l. 5. c. 12. * Etiam si quid faciant quod oportet; non faciunt ut oportet. Grot. in loc.

Nature,

Chap. 4. Nature, they are a *savour of Life unto Life*; to him they prove, *the savour of Death unto Death*, 2 Cor. 2. 16. Sin hinders *profit by the word of God*, which is able to save the soul, Heb. 4. 2. And *Temporal Mercies*, Wealth, Honour, Friends, and other Comforts; if sin doth not rob Men of them, as it frequently doth: 'twill prove a *Canker* in them, utterly to destroy the *sweet*, and *good* thereof. That threat against the *wicked Priests*, * Mal. 2. 2. was only for their iniquity: and therefore reacheth all men else that are like them. I will send a *Curse upon you*, and I will *curse your blessings*: yea I have *curst them already*. And Jer. 5. 25. God tells them, *your iniquities have turned away these things* (mercies spoken of) *and your sins withhold good things from you*. Should I prosecute largely the direful Effects, of this kind, sin hath produced in the World; and shew you all the Havock made thereby, an Age would not suffice to do it in. Judge of the *Curse upon the sinners Blessings* brought by sin; by its Ruining,

* *Vestras felicitates infelicitabo: Vos pro felicibus infelices reddam.* Cast. ap. Pol. Syn.

1. *Single Persons.* It thrust *Adam* Chap. 4. Ruines 1. Persons. out of Paradise ; made *Cain* a Vagabond ; turn'd *Lots Wife* into a Pillar of Salt ; smote *Miriam* with a Leprosie ; rob'd *Esau* of his Birthright ; took the Kingdom from *Saul* ; brake *Judas* his Neck ; slew *Ananias* and his *Wife* ; and equally mischieved *infinite numbers* more.

2. *Families.* It opened the Earths 2. Families. mouth, on *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* ; and those that appertained to them ; *Numb. 16.* 'Twas for the Iniquity of *Eli's Sons*, which he restrained not ; that *his house was judg'd* for ever ; and no sacrifice could purge the same ; *1 Sam. 3.* and *4.* What mischief did *Ahab*, the King of *Israel*, and his house recieve from *sin* ; when it wholly perished thereby ; even he that *pissed against the wall*, and he that *was shut up*, and *left in Israel* : as it had done with the houses of *two other Kings* before him, *2 King 9. 8, 9.* ? As it hath, else-where, done, and will do, to the greatest *Emperors* of the World beside.

3. *Cities.* What brought the fire of 3. Cities. Hell out of Heaven ; even Fire and Brimstone upon *Sodom*, and *Gomorrhah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim* ; Neighbour Towns

Chap. 4. Towns thereto? Was it not their *Sin*, Gen. 19.? What made *Jerusalem*, the Beloved City, in her *first Captivity*, solitary as a *Widow*, and come down wonderfully? Because, her *filthiness was in her skirts*, and she *sinned grievously*, Lam. 1. 8, 9. And in her *last Captivity*, what made her *utterly desolate*, but her wickedness also? Mat. 23. 38. And, tho' the *wicked Papists* made the Fire, 'twas *Londons Sin*, that blew it up into a Flame, for its own Consumption into Ashes.

4. King-
doms.;

4. *Kingdomes*. How many of them in *Joshua's* time, were overthrown by *sin*? Read but his Book, and you will find great store. If they were little Nations; yet sure the Countries belonging unto *Moab*, *Damascus*, *Egypt*, and *Babylon*, were large Dominions: yet *sin* was a burden, able to break the backs of all of them, Isa. 13. and 15. and 17. and 19. chap. Nay the *Land of Promise* was turned into a Curse; and the flourishing Kingdomes, of both *Samaria* and *Judah* there, were overturn'd by *sin*. May *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, which *sin* hath sadly shaken, by timely Repentance escape the falling in peeces by the same. *Sin can be*

be too hard for them ! For at once it Chap. 4.
swept away, in the last Place.

5. *A whole World* : Eight persons, 5. A
only, being excepted, and saved ; VVorld
Gen 7. at once.

Such is sins Behaviour also towards
the *Creature*, as well as the *Creator* :
abominably injurious unto *Him* ; and
desperately mischievous unto *It* ! Oh,
the *amazing Evil therein* !

4. Lastly, *Whither it goeth hence*. Be- Issue.
fore an answer whereunto, let it be 4. VVhi-
observed, That it doth not go away ther it
alone ; but ever carrieth the Impeni- goes
tent sinner in the Company of it. And, hence.
*whither is it ? Truly, to the place from
whence * it came, and so to Execution.*
As *Solomons* Philosophy reporteth of
the *Rivers* ; the *Christians* Theology
doth of *Sin* : to the place from whence
they came, thither they return again ;
Eccl. 1. 7. *Rivers* spring from the *Sea* ;
and into that they empty themselves,
with whatsoever they can sweep toge-
ther with them. Sin cometh from the
Bottomless Gulf ; and there it lodgeth
again, and the partakers with it, in

* Ex Inferno prodit, eoque redit.

Chap. 4. that place of Torment. *Abraham* told the Rich sinner; that after Death the *Pious Beggar was in comfort*; but his *Ungodly self tormented*, Luk. 16. 25. Who thinks of this, with a sad and serious heart? To enjoy House, Lands, and Monies *here*; and whatever the heart can wish: but yet to live in sin and wickedness, serves only for a Purchase of a place of Torment, in the other World hereafter! who but a Madman, would take a *Guinny*, an 100, or a 1000 *l.* to be hang'd? who else, would sell himself to the *Rack*, or *Wheel*, but for one hour, to get some *Toy* or *Trifle*? Impenitent sinners out-doe this Madness! They sell themselves for nought, to woful Misery! *Sin*, their conceited Honey to the Mouth, proves Gall, and Wormwood to their Hearts at last. Seriously consider of these 3 Properties of that sore Punishment, which necessarily followes sin in the Life to come. It is *Intollerable*, for 'tis *Universal*, and will be *Eternal*.

Sins Punishment

I. 'Tis

1. 'Tis *intollerable*. Tho I express'd Chap. 4:
1. Intol-
lerable. the other Properties, as Proofs of this; which indeed they are: yet, truly, there is no need of being beholden to them for that purpose. Do but call to mind, *who is the Author of it*; by what *Executioners*; and with what *kind of Pains they suffer*; you will quickly say; *who is able to abide them!* But they must be endured!

1. *For the Author*. 'Tis the Almighty, and Incensed Deity. He whose *amazing Patience*, sinner, worn out by thine abuse and contempt thereof, is justly turned into *righteous Fury!* That God, who bare so long a time with thy insufferable provocations; and all that while, held forth his *Golden Scepter*, to invite thee unto Mercy by repentance; having lost his labour, through thy scornful insolence and defiance of him; now taketh up his *Iron Rod*, to make thee feel the weight of his displeasure. That very *Lamb of God*, that died to take away thy sins, and save thy Soul, wouldst thou have hearkned to him; now, for thy de-

* *Spem non habent nec habebunt; desperatione deficient, & ad tormenta non sufficient.* Aug. de Spir. & Anim. c. 56.

Chap. 4. sperate, and most unreasonable obstinacy, lives, and proves himself a *Lyön*, to tear the same in peeces. *Who, Lord, can stand in thy sight; when once thou art angry?* Psal. 76. 7. *Who may abide the day of his coming,* Mal. 3. 2. *The Seas shrink up; the Earth trembles; and the Rocks are rent before him! How shall the sinners heart endure the Almighty's avenging hand! The helpless shifts, that will be flown to then!* Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17. *The Kings of the Earth; the Mighty, and the Mean sinners, will hide in dens and Rocks; cry to the Mountains to fall on them, to hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* Mark, *Meekness it self is turned into meer Terror!*

2. Then, *by what Executioners?* *The Devil and his Angels,* Mat. 25. 41. *Where is the stoutest sinner, that can endure the sight of One of these Infernal Spirits? How many of them, have fallen sick; some Mad; and others Dyed; at a conceited Apparition? What will it be? How will they fare; to be really amongst the whole Crew of them; and as their cruel Executioners? Remember the misery Job endured, in his*

his Estate, and Children, and Person, Chap. 4:
by the Devil; whilst the Almighty
held him fast in his Chain, and he could
not stir one foot beyond his Tedder.
But wretched sinner! Here, God lets
him loose: and spurs him on: and he
hath none other solace, but thy Tor-
ments!

3. Lastly, And by what kind of Pains
shall sinners suffer? Why? *That of loss:*
how Great, and Sad! He loseth * God,
and Heaven, and all the Joy and Bliss
in Both! Think of it! To part which
a fair Estate; dear Friends, or Chil-
dren; thy Limbs; or Senses: what
an affliction is it? Even these, like
Burdens unsupportable, have sunk ma-
ny down unto their Graves. But here,
are Othergueses losses! Luk. 13. 28.
*There shall be weeping and gnashing of
teeth; when you shall see others in Gods
Kingdom, and your selves shut out. But,
That of Sense too, increaseth the Ter-
rors of them. For there's both Fire,
and a VVorm. There will be Fire,
Mal. 25. ult. And the Breath of the
Lord, like a stream of brimstone kindles
it, Isa. 30. ult. This is a Raging, furi-*

* Deum non videbunt; quod est omnium miseriae
miserrimum. Id. ibidem.

Chap. 4. ous, and tormenting Element, *here*.
 What will it be, *hereafter*? Can't we
 endure a Finger in it now? How will
they abide the rowling, and wallow-
 ing of their whole Bodies in it then?
 But there's a *worm*, which makes more
 smart, Mar. 9. 44. *A worm that never*
dyeth, and fire that shall not be quenched.
 This worm gnaweth on the *Conscience*,
 and wounds the *heart*. And a *wounded*
spirit who can bear, Prov. 18. 14.? To
 think, O sinner, how fair thou some-
 times wast for happiness: how many
 warnings thou hadst given thee against
 thy sins: how powerfully thou wast
 wooed unto Jesus Christ: how fre-
 quently thou wast resolved to turn
 over a new Leaf: how long God wait-
 ed for thy performance of it: to
 think, how Friends, and Ministers, and
 thy Conscience, all complied to such
 a pitch of Conviction of thee; that
 thou hadst not one word to say, for
 staying where thou wast; and being
 what thou hadst been, a wicked sinner
 against God and thine own soul: and
 yet, that (sottish, senseless, and mad
 Villain as thou wast!) thou shouldst
 go on desperately in thine Iniquity,
 which must be paid for, so dearly at the
 last!

last ! How will this enrage thee ; to Chap. 4.
 tear thy hair, and gnaw thy flesh, and
 stab thy very heart, again ! How will
 it make thee weep, and howl, and
 gnash thy Teeth with anguish, to a
 sad Eternity ! Oh, how Intollerable is
 the sinners Torment.

2. *Thy* will be *Universal* also. Thy 2. Uni-
 Soul, and Body shar'd in sin ; and versal.
 * Both shall have their part in punish-
 ment. *Fear not him*, saith Christ, *that*
can kill the body, and no more : *but fear*
him that can (and will too, if sinners
 do not repent) *cast soul and body into*
Hell, Mat. 10. 28. Do not so soon
 forget, what thou just now hast read
 about the *Fire* and *Worms*, that are
 prepared for the wicked : and withall
 take notice, foolish sinner, tho' thou
 must have *now* nothing but *Delicacies*
 for thy Touch, and what's delightful,
 tho' it be plain-Hellish Pleasure : *then*
 thou hast only *Flames* to gratifie thee.
Now, sweet *Perfumes*, and *pleasant*

* In carne cruciabuntur per ignem : in spiritu per con-
 scientiæ vermem. Ibi erit mors animæ & corporis —
 Sic tamen morientur, ut semper vivant : & sic vivent,
 ut semper moriantur. S. Bernh Medic. c. 3. Vermis
 conscientiam corrodet, ignis carnem comburet : quatenus
 qui Autori suo, corde & corpore deliquerunt, corde &
 corpore simul puniantur. Aug. de Spir. & Anima l. 56.

Chap. 4. *scents* are sought for by thee; *then*,
stench of *Brimstone* will possess thee.
Now, *Dainties* must be gotten for thy
Curious Pallate; *then*, must thy *Tongue*
 taste flaming *Sulphur*, as its only repast.
Now, the rarest *Spectacles*, *sights*, and
shewes must be prepared for thine
Eyes; *then* the *Infernal Crew*, and no-
 thing else will appear before thee. *Now*,
 the *Melodious Tunes* of *Voice* and *In-*
strument must fill thine *Ears*; *then*
 howling, roaring, and gnashing of
 teeth will be *Mens* doleful *Entertain-*
ment: and *Thou* thy self shall bear a
 dismal part therein.

3. Eternal 3. Lastly, *It must be Eternal*, too.
 You heard but now of the *worm* that
 never dyeth, and the *Fire* that shall not
 be quenched. And our Saviour saith,
 the *Wicked* shall go away into * *everlast-*
ing punishment; but the *Righteous* in-
 to *life Eternal*, Mat. 25. ult. And his
 Apostle after him, that those who
 know not God, and obey not the Gospel,
 shall be punished with *Everlasting de-*
struction, 2 Thes. 1. 9. Oh Word of
 horror to the *Impenitent Soul*! To

* *Miseris mors est sine morte, finis sine fine, defectus sine defectu: quia & mors semper vivet, & finis semper incipiet, & defectus deficere nesciet. Id. ibidem.*

suffer for its wickedness so *intollerably*, Chap. 4.
universally, and *Eternally* too ! All this,
most *certainly* ; and most *justly* ! The
racking Fits of *Stone*, and *Gout*, and
Strangury use to have some remission,
and will at length be over with us.
To be sure, at last the Grave will give
men respite from them, and full *Deliverance*. But Sinners Torments have
no end ; nor any *intermission*. When
they have roared at the back of Hell
more years, than there are sands upon
the shore, or drops of water in the
Sea, or Stars in Heaven : Still, still
their Grief, and Anguish, and *Wo*,
is but Beginning, and will never End.
The very worst of Evils *here*, and most
by all avoided, is but *Death*. But
there it will be Courtèd ; and shall fly
from them. They shall never dye :
but will be dying eternally ! And as no
Remedy can be found : so no *Easè*, or
Rest will be afforded. Those that are
cast into the most cruel Bridewell ;
Wretches condemned to the *Spanish*
Mines ; Slaves chained to their Oars
in *Turkey* ; have all, some little pit-
tances of time allowed for a sorry re-
freshment to them. Only the Impe-
nitent Sinner, as he was restless in
offending

Chap. 4. offending God, he must be too in suffering from an Offended God. *The smoak of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night, Rev. 14. 11.*

Oh ! What a *Cursed*, and *Evil Thing* is Sin ! Of what Importance is it, to *Turn from it !* when you Consider, *what it is ; from whence it came ; How it behaves it self here ; and whither it goes from hence.* Which is the fourth Argument.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

5. Arg. Excellency of Holiness exacts it from us. Six Characters thereof;
 1. Image of God. 2. Highest Dignity and Perfection of Humane Nature.
 3. Renders dear to the whole Creation. 4. Gives communion with God.
 5. Puts under his immediate Protection. 6. Ends in Endless Bliss.

5. **T**HE Ravishing Excellency of Arg. 5.
 Holiness exacteth from us, To turn from Sin. With that we shall be honoured; were we but quit of this. And this will prove as sure and certain to us, as 'tis for him, that is healed of his *Disease*, to enjoy his health again; cured of his *Blindness*, to see the light; and whose broken *Leg* is set and well, to stand and walk. Sin makes the Soul both *Lame*, and *Blind*, and fills it with a *sore Disease* all over; whence 'tis disabled utterly to that Duty whereunto it stands obliged; and is made liable to all that wofull misery, we have heard of. But *Holiness* doth restore

Chap. 5. store the Soul ; and proves, its freedom from that Wo we heard of. Should I do nothing else but repeat the Mischief of Sins making, and shew how Holiness doth prevent, or cure the same; what an *high commendation were it thereunto!* But leaving that, as proper work for you to exercise your own thoughts upon at Leisure ; my purpose is to make fresh offer to you of five or six of *its deserved Characters* ; with this acknowledgement and profession, that 'tis past the Skill of my rude Pensil, and of the most Curious Artist living, I dare say, to draw this Peece unto the Life.

five or six
Charact-
ers of
Holiness.

1. Cha-
racter.

1. Then, *It is the lively Image of God himself.* Many Excellencies are justly attributed to the *sovereign Being*: and He, in Truth, exceedeth infinitely, whatsoever Glory, of any kind, Man can ascribe unto him. Yet he doth seem to take peculiar pleasure in styling of himself an *Holy God*: and therefore urgeth, that his Creatures should be *like* him in it. I shall only send you unto *Levit. 11. 44, 45. and 19. 2. compared with 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. I am holy, saith the Lord ; therefore be*

you

you so too; viz. that you may be like Chap. 5.
me. To live in Sin, makes Men the
Pictures of the very Devil: but when
their Hearts, and Lives are Holy, they
represent and resemble God. 'Twas
said in Gen. 1. 26. *Let us make Man in
our Image, and after our likeness.* Thus
was man made at first: and he contin-
ued like his Maker, whilst he contin-
ued *Holy*. When once Sin seiz'd him,
that *Divine Beauty* left him, and *Sa-
tans Likeness* came upon him. Thus
he abideth a sullied and most deform-
ed Peece, until by *Grace* renewed.
That alone restores him to the
Primitive * Similitude of God upon
him. Hereby, the sinner is become a
New Man; which, after God is cre-
ated in *Righteousness* and true *Holiness*,
Eph. 4. 24. That is, after *Gods Image
and Likeness*. And this Apostle doth
more plainly shew us, that the work of
Grace, or *Holiness*, in the Soul, is the
most lively Image of the most holy
Majesty, Col. 3. 10. For there we are
instructed, that The *New Man* lyeth
in A *renewed Mind*, an *Holy Know-*

* Illa anima a Deo pingitur, quæ habet in se virtutum
gratiam renitentem, splendorem quæ pietatis. S. Ambr.
Hex. l. 6. c. 7.

Chap. 5. ledge (1 Joh. 2. 3.) and consequently, An Heavenly Life : *after the Image of him that created him* : that is, having a * suitableness, and conformity unto, and bearing a resemblance of, the *Holy God himself*. Oh the amazing Excellency, and Miraculous Power of *Real Holiness* ! To turn *Darkness* into *Light* ; change *Dirt* to *Gold* ; and transform *Deformity* into ravishing *Beauty* ! That will make a *filthy Child* of *Hell*, like to the * *Glorious God of Heaven* ! Indeed, so like him ; that they are therefore called, and become, *his very Children* : as sin makes like the Devil, and the sinner to be his Off-spring. For 1 Joh. 3. 10. *In this the Children of God are manifested, and the children of the Devil : whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God ; is of the Devil, therefore : as the Holy and Righteous Man hath God for his Father ; and indeed is like him, bearing his Image on him.*

* Anima abducens se a corporis cœno, & cupiditate carnali, ipsa est ad imaginem Dei, conformis Domino Jesu. Cui autem conformes filii Dei, Sancti sunt. Ibid. c. 8.
 * Nihil est Deo similius & gratius, quam vir animo perfecto bonus : qui tam hominibus ceteris antecellit, quam ipse a Diis immortalibus distat. Apul: de Deo Socrar. (respecting this and the following Character.)

How should this raise the Price of Chap. 9.
Holiness with us; and engage our utmost hatred against *all Sin*, which is its contrary, and destructive of it? Let them that dote on Beauty, wish themselves to match with *Absalom*: that highly esteem of strength, to be equal unto *Sampson*: that admire Wisdom, to outdoe *Solomon*: should not every one of us, thus rouse up himself; *O my soul, be thou in love with, and pursue Holiness, that thou mayst be like to God; and yet more so!*

2. Holiness is the highest Dignity, ^{2 Chara-}
Honour, and Perfection of Humane ^{cter.}
Nature. How sadly Mankind is degenerated from that Primitive State wherein 'twas made, is more notorious, than to need discourse of now: and indeed, we lately heard so much thereof, as rather calls for Tears, than Words again. And for a perfect Cure; that is impossible altogether, in this mortal State; or truly, any degree of Reparation, without *Real Holiness*. They are very foolish Measures which those Men take, who think the * *Gawdes*, and

* *Tota licet veteres exornent undique cera Atria: Nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus.* Juven. Sat. 8.

Chap. 5. *Pageantries* of this World, will, or can contribute ought towards these Noble Ends. *Riches, Pleasures, Power, and Grandeur*; and such Real Vanities; are nothing of kin hereto. We heard before from the Holy Psalmist; *That Man being in honour, and understanding not* (which is, to want Grace and Holiness, Psal. 111. 10.) *is like the Beast that perisheth. Learning, Wisdom, and Prudence, tho' they are far better Ornaments than the Other, are yet defective, if alone. For the wisdom of this world* (whereof we speak) *is foolishness with God, 1 Cor. 3. 19. Only* * *Grace and Holiness* can enoble and restore us. This likens the poor Creature to his Great Creator; as we heard. Even this, where Other things are wanting, puts a Spirit of Excellency into him. Therefore Solomon said, *A man of understanding is of an Excellent Spirit, Prov. 17. 27. Should it be doubtful, whether that Understanding, or Knowledge, here spoken of, be the same with what he saith, The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of, Chap. 1. 7. and which as his Father taught him did*

* Nullo virtus honestamento eget: ipsa & magnum sui decus est, & corpus suum consecrat. Sen. Ep. 67. l. 9.

lye, in doing Gods Commandments, in Chap. 5. the Psalm and verse last quoted : (and to be sure the highest Parts leave men, without Grace, the rankest Fools :) yet, that an *Holy Frame* doth make men truly honourable, and above the rank of * other Mortals is most undoubted, by the self-same Mouth, chap. 12. 26. For there 'tis peremptorily said, *The righteous is more Excellent than his Neighbour*. Note, that 'tis not affirmed ; He is more *Rich* or *Powerful*, more *Wise* or *Honourable* in the Worlds account, than his Neighbour is. No, no : in matters of this Nature, the advantage commonly lieth on the other side. Yet still, and notwithstanding that, *He is more Excellent*. There is most valuable reason, to give him the Preference, and Pre-eminence. A learned Man doth not so much excel an Idiot, nor a Prince a Beggar ; as an Holy Man, a Sinner. Why ? over and above what you read but now, of bearing the Deity's Image on his Soul, *He is born of God*, 1 Joh. 2. 29. *Hath his seed in him*, Ibid. 3. 9. And partak-

* *Virtus laudabiles efficit eos in quibus est ; & ipsa per se, sua sponte, separata etiam utilitate, laudabilis.*
Cic. in Tusc. 2. l. 4.

Chap. 5. *eth of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. Thus, he liveth not for nought, as others do : but answers the Ends of his Creation, which others cannot, who pervert them wholly.

2. Character.

3. It renders *Men dear, amiable, and beloved to the whole Creation*: I mean, that keep in their Allegiance to their Sovereign, God. For others: who would value the good opinion, or respects of Traytors and Rebels? What a great Expression is that in the Book of *Job* 5. 23? The holy and good man *shall be in * league with the stones of the street; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with him*: Meaning, that the *Inanimate, and sensitive Creatures* shall have peculiar service for them, that truly fear God. And that in Common mischeifs from any of them arising, Providence will take especial Care about their proving inoffensive, and rather useful to them. The same thing is intended *Hos.* 2. 18. For them God *will make a Covenant with the beasts of the Field.* And *Ps.* 91. 13.

* *Si cum Deo reconciliatus fueris, lapides, ferae, omnes denique res creatæ jure fœderis, tibi subservient.*
Jun. in loc.

He,

He, the righteous Man, shall tread upon Chap. 5.
 the Lyon and Adder : the young Lyon
 and Dragon he shall trample under foot.
 God taketh, as you see, such care of
 Good Men ; that he undertaketh,
*None of the unreasonable Creatures shall
 be truly hurtful to them.*

And how doth Holiness render men ^{2. Saints}
 to the *Saints on Earth* ? Let Holy Da- ^{on Earth.}
 vid make the Answer, Psal. 16. 3. *Thou
 art my Lord ; my goodness extendeth not
 to thee : but to the Saints on Earth (and
 who are they ?) and to the Excellent
 (a further proof of the second Chara-
 cter) : in whom is all My * Delight.*
 Saints, and Holy-Ones are the same
 thing in different expressions. And
 tho' they may be but mean Ones here,
 they are acceptable to the Mighty, who
 fear the Lord. *David's Delight* lay
 there. Holy Kings, for such was He,
 think it not beneath them, to make
 such their Associates. *I am a Compa-
 nion of * all them that fear thee, and of
 them that keep thy Commandments,*

* Nihil est virtute amabilius ; quam qui adeptus erit,
 ubicunque erit gentium, a Nobis diligetur. Cicer. de
 nat. Deor. l. 1. ad fin. * Constat, bonis inter bonos qua
 si necessariam benevolentiam esse. Id. de Amicit.

Chap. 5. Psal. 119. 63. [*All*]: none excepted. Different Conditions in the World could make no difference here.

3. Holy
Angels.

But for the *Holy Angels*: What esteem they have of Holy Men, the *Royal Psalmist* shall speak again. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* Wonderful! * *Holy Angels are a Guard to Holy Men!* Will not the Wicked tremble, that design their Mischiefs? Will they not see, that they rush upon the Points of Naked Swords? Do not they know, what Execution *One Angel* made in *One Night*, when 185000 Armed Enemies of Gods People fell before him? *Isa.* 37. 36. Howe're; Good Men may well rejoice in such an *Heavenly Guard!* For not only *One* of these; but *All* are pleased with this Office! For *are they not All Ministering Spirits: sent forth to Minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation?* Yes; they are so, *Heb.* 1. 14. And so much *Friends*, that they are *willing Servants* to them. *Such is Holiness's Excellency!*

* *Ἡμῖν ὑπηρετοῦντες*, &c. *Nobis laborant, propter nos discunt, nobis obsequium impendant:* Chrysost. in *Heb.* Hom. 3.

And

And so Obliging is it, to the whole Creation, that deserves our value! Chap. 5:

4. Can it be otherwise, when *It gives* ^{4 Character.} *Communion with the Blessed God himself?* Touching friendship with whom; An Expedient for procuring that, without an *Holy frame of heart and life*, there is not any in the World. *He is of purer eyes than to behold Evil; or look upon iniquity.* And *he hateth all the workers of it*; as both the Prophet *Habakuk*, and Psalmist *David*, already, have assured us. Sinners therefore may be company for *Great Men* here: *Potentates*, and *Princes* upon Earth may be friendly and familiar with them. Nay; they may be planted in *Christs Vineyard*; and injoy the highest Priviledges in his *Church*: but all this while, God turns his back upon them; they must not see his *Holy Face*. They are no Company for *him*. For *the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright*, Psal. 11. 7. Other termes of Fellowship, and of friendship with him there are none, than an *Heart*, and *Life*, adorn'd with *Holiness*. *How can two walk together except they be agreed*, saith the Prophet? *What fellow-*

Chap. 5. *ship hath light with darknes: what concord hath Christ with Belial, are the questions of a Blessed Apostle? May not we as well demand, How shall an Holy God afford communion with an Unholy Soul? But on the other hand, If any man love me, he will keep my Commandements, is our Saviours saying. And, what comes on it then? My Father will * love him, is our Dear Redeemers answer; and we will come unto him, and make our * abode with him. Joh. 14. 23. How welcom are Dear Friends to us, tho' we are put unto some little costs thereby? But with what joy and gladness are God and Christ entertained by an Holy Soul! For they bear all the charge; and bring a Feast of Fat things with them. Most certain 'tis, that if we walk in the light of Gospel Faith and Holiness; then have we fellowship one with another, * God and we together; and the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin, 1 Joh.*

* In unoquoque virorum bonorum habitat Deus. Sen. Ep. 41. l. 5. * Inter bonos viros ac Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute: imo etiam necessitudo, & similitudo. Ibid. de Div. Prov. c. 1. * Deo, qui ubique est, non locis, sed actionibus, aut longinqui, aut proximi sumus: quia sicut sepe rat dissimilitudo, ita Nos illi conjungit imitatio. Prosop. lib. 3. Sen. Ex Aug. 91.

1. 7. Unto *Christs Bloud* indeed, our Chap. 5.
 Pardon, and our Peace too, must be
 ascribed entirely, as the *only Meritori-*
ous Cause thereof: but actually, *There*
is no peace to the wicked, saith my God,
Isa. 57. 21. and 48. 22. And repentance
 must be practised, as well as preached,
 for *remission* of sins, *Luk. 24. 27. Act.*
2. 28. For No man *is in Christ*, par-
 taketh of his Benefits, except he be a
New Creature, *2 Cor. 5. 17.* This is
 Gods Order; and who shall dare to
 violate it, and be guiltless? Be then
renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put
on the New Man of Holiness: and as
 you will be meet for; so surely, you
 shall be partakers of this singular Bles-
 sing, *Fellowship with the Holy God.* For
 Saints may say; *Truly our Fellowship is*
with the Father, and with his Son Jesus
Christ, 1 Joh. 1. 3. And what is *this!*
 To be Gods *Friend*, and *Favourite!*
Many will intreat the Princes favour,
saith the Wise Man. But how infinitely
 more desirable is the Favor of the *King*
of Kings? In whose favour there is life,
 and at whose right hand are pleasures for
 evermore; *A day in whose Courts is bet-*
ter than a thousand elsewhere: And in
 whose house a *Mighty King* chose rather

Chap. 5. *to be a Door-keeper, than to dwell in Tents of wickedness*; and we may add, *or Palaces of Impiety*, Psal. 84. 10. and 16. 11.

5 Chara-
cter.

5. *Holiness putteth Men immediately under the Divine Protection*: so that, the * Fatherly Care of the Allseeing, and Almighty God is ever over them that are truly Godly. And, what a Blessing is This! Who can declare the worth hereof! Consider what a world, as full of Dangers, as the Sea of Waters, we are living in! Nests of *Corruptions* are within us: Throngs of *Temptations* are without us: and if Loads of *Afflictions* are not on us, yet the Black Clouds thereof are hanging over us; and how soon they may break and pour down upon us, who can tell? How happy is it for them that have a *Shelter* from the storm; a *Refuge* from the Pursuer; and a *strong Tower* to run into from the Enemy! Harken now. *The name of the Lord*

* *Omnem curam vestram super dominum mittite; pro-
sus vosipsos totos projicite in eum; Non se subducit ut ca-
datis; ille qui nos creavit, & de ipsis capillis nostris
securitatem nobis dedit; Amen dico vobis, & capilli ca-
pitis vestri numerati sunt, &c.* Aug. de verb. Dni in
Evang. S. Mar. Serm. 6. Tom. 10.

is a strong Tower. But is it open unto Chap. 5.

All Men? Truly, No. The Righteous runneth into it, and is safe, Prov.

18. 10. There is no security for the wicked. But the most Wise, most Mighty, and most Merciful *Jehovah*, becomes an *Hiding Place* for Holy Men;

and who shall find them out to do them hurt? Good People are too apt to be in sore distress with Griefs, and Cares, and Fears sometimes; and at this day, there seemeth to be cause enough thereof, God knowes it. But what said the *Holy Jesus* to his Servant *Peter*, when he was in danger, and much afraid thereof; *O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt*, Mat.

14. 31. Even that was no small fault, considering under whose special Care he was. And we, if the Fear of God rule in our hearts, if we are truly turned from our sins, and really have Gods Image, *Holiness*, in our Souls, may still and quiet our Hearts; may make them bold and confident under all Evils, that we *feel*, or *fear*. Is it not said to such, *Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving* (the mercies desired by you, being as sure unto you,

Chap. 5. as if you had them in your hand already) *make your request known unto God,* Phil. 4. 6. Unload your burdened Souls into the Bosom of God. Here's all the Task: and now, both easie, and delightful is it? Your Care's now over: for *God taketh care for you; and his eyes are over you,* 1 Pet. 5. 7. and 3. 12. Is not God strong enough to bear thee up? Then *cast thy burden on him, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved,* Psal. 55. 22. Shaken they may be: but stand sure they shall. *God is their refuge and strength: a very present help in time of trouble,* Psal. 46. 1. All this Assurance, and a great deal more, the holy Scriptures do afford of the Divine Protection, and peculiar Care, for *Holy, and Good Men:* tho' to the wicked it be not so much a Perfect Blank, as a Book of Terror rather. For to them (they tell us) *God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or take my Covenant into thy mouth,* Psal. 50. 16. No word of Comfort, in that Condition, in the Book of God for them! But it is as full of Consolation, as the Sky with Stars, and the Sun with Light, to them that truly fear the Lord

Lord. Such is the happiness that attendeth *Holiness* ! Chap. 5.

6. In the last place : *It Ends in Endless Bliss*. Present *Holiness* is the *Sub-urbs*, whereof *Eternal Happiness* is the *City*. And as the *Suburbs* joyn, and lead into the *City* ; nor can you enter *that*, unless you pass through *this* : So *Grace* is unto *Glory*. The naked Truth is ; They only differ, as a Child doth from a Man. The *kind* in both is the same : the *Degrees* not so. *Grace* is *Glory* in *Minority* ; and *Glory* is *Grace* *Adult*. This is one reason, why a true Believer, that is the Sanctified and Holy Person, is said in *this life*, to have Possession of *Eternal Life*, Joh. 3. 36. He that believeth on the Son, hath * *Everlasting Life* : viz. in the Beginning ; not the Consummation, and Perfection of it, yet. But this Beginning, as 'tis part of Christ's *Purchase* for his People ; so is it the *Earneſt* of the whole Bargain : and doth secure and confirm, the Rest to be enjoyed in its season. The Apostle speaking of the *Holy Spirit* in us, (so called because he

* ut intelligamus fideles jam eternâ vitâ per Christum etiam dum vivunt donari. Musc. in Joh. 6. 54.

Chap. 5. worketh Holiness where he is) faith,
*It is the Earnest of our Inheritance, the
 Pawn, and Pledge of Happiness that
 shall ensue hereafter. Eph. 1. 14. Let
 us but get, and keep an Holy Heart
 and Life on Earth, and Eternal Life in
 Heaven cannot but follow at the heels
 thereof *. The Water, which Christ
 giveth, and proves a Well of water spring-
 ing up to everlasting Life (Joh. 4. 14.)
 Can be nothing else but the Spirits
 Work of Grace and Holiness in the Soul :*
 which will not be of short, and transi-
 ent service to you ; but last unto, and
 issue in, at last, Everlasting Life. Our
 only Care is, but to get, and not to
 grieve this Holy Spirit, whereby we
 are thus sealed to the Day of Redempti-
 on, Eph. 4. 30. *Let us not be weary in
 well doing : and, as it follows, in due
 time we shall reap, if we faint not, Gal.*
*6. 9. Most certain 'tis, where men are
 freed from sin, and become Gods servants,
 they have their fruit unto holiness ; and
 then, the End Everlasting Life, Rom.*
6. 22. All other Comforts of this World,
 whatsoever they are, and how dear

* *Amplectamur sanctificationem, quoniam bona est ;
 quoniam finis ejus, Vita sine fine.* Bernh. in Pf. Qui hab.
 Serm. 17.

soever they may be to us, must shortly Chap. 5.

leave us, and can accompany us at the furthest but to our Graves: but Holy Works take Wing, and mount up after Men to Heaven it self. Blessed are the dead, that dye in the Lord (and they must have lived so before): for they

rest from their labour, and their works

+ follow them, Rev. 14. 13. What an

admirable Value must such thoughts as

these raise Holiness to! When, unto

all the former Characters of it, this

likewise is to be added, That it most

certainly leads to life Eternal, and

Ends in * Endless Bliss!

Seeing then we look for such things,

what manner of persons ought we to be in

all holy Conversation and Godliness! How

should we turn from sin with all our

might! And how doth the Excellency

of Holiness exact it at our hands! Which

is the Fifth Argument, and Leads unto

the last.

* ubi est certa securitas, & secura tranquillitas, & tranquilla jucunditas: felix eternitas, & aeterna felicitas. Prosp. de Vir. Cont. l. 1. c. 2.

+ Follow them
not go before

them to justify
themselves

Bliss & Redemption
that Divine

perfect Blessing

but good
merits and

sanctification
are always

attained unto

upon a
justified

And 2nd

Christians to be

without holiness
is as impossible

as 2nd
without
Heaven

C H A P. VI.

6 Arg. Indispensable necessity thereof for escaping Hell and entering Heaven : Holiness, 1. The Condition God hath made, 2. Qualification which Man doth need, 3. Is part of Heaven, the Entrance and Beginning of it.

Arg. 6.

6. **T**HE last Argument for the great Importance of turning from our Sin to God, is ; *The Absolute and Indispensable Necessity of so doing, for escaping Hell and getting into Heaven.* Dear Friends ; *The turning from our sin, is not a Matter of Indifferency, that may be done or let alone, at your discretion ; unless you also think, that Heaven, and Hell, are of none higher Consequence unto you.* Let men's opinions be what they will, and tho' they practise what they please ; we must declare it in the Name of the *Eternal and Almighty God*, and by Commission from him ; *That whosoever will not turn from Sin*

Sin to God here, shall be turned by God Chap. 6.
into Hell hereafter. And, whosoever will
not get him Holiness in this Life, shall
never obtain Happiness in the Life to come.

That Man. or Woman hath never seen the Holy Scriptures, I mean, to be acquainted with them : or is an Infidel and an Atheist, not believing the Truth thereof, who doth not readily yield assent to both those Propositions. God Almighty hath *so often*, and *so expressly* signified, repeated, and confirmed his Resolution touching Mens final and eternal Estates, according to the Contents *Thereof* ; and that *so absolutely*, *peremptorily*, and *irreversibly* ; that if *God be True*, they must, and shall be, certainly, made good. What *desperate Folly* therefore is it ; what *downright Madness*, not to be match'd in any Bedlam of the World ; for Men to live, and continue in their sins, and yet to flatter themselves, with foolish hopes of a good, or, at the least, a tolerable issue at the last ? Why do they not, as well, go throw themselves down some steep rock ; or leap into the deepest Sea ; or drink great draughts of the rankest Poyson ; or stab themselves at the very heart, with highest expectations still, that

Chap. 6. that there's no hurt, or danger in these, or any such like frantick practices? Verily, to proceed in wickedness, and to presume of scaping harmless, is more unaccountable, and more unreasonable far. We know, what Over-ruling Providence *can do*, by what it hath done; in interposing at the extreamest dangers. I need not mention the *three Children, Daniels*, nor *Jonah's Cases*. No, nor any others like them: since *nothing is too hard for God*, which he is minded to undertake. But Here, he hath declared his Resolution; his Will, and Pleasure, to the contrary. Sinners cannot be saved without sincere Repentance. *Death*, and that Eternal, (by the Antithesis in the next Clause) is *sins Wages*, Rom. 6. 21, 23. And if *you live after the flesh, you shall dye*, Chap. 8. 13. For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of men. Chap. 1. 18. And unto them that obey unrighteousness, there is indignation, and wrath, tribulation, and anguish, to every Soul of them, *Jewes or Gentiles*. Chap. 2. 8, 9. For the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and

and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Chap. 6.

Jesus Christ ; who shall be punished with destruction everlasting, 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. Except therefore ye *repent, O sinful Men and Women, ye shall All likewise perish, Luk.

13. 3, 5. O ye inconsiderate Wretches ; whatever sweet-meats Sin may entertain you with at first ; how dear sooner its after-Caresses may seem unto you : behold, the sad and dismal winding up of all at last ! What dread, and horror ; what confusion and astonishment will seize upon you, when, standing on the left hand with the Goats, to whom ye appertain, you shall hear that Heart-breaking Doom, Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels, Mat. 25. 41 ?

[Depart] be gone, saith Jesus Christ. Whence, may the sinner say ? From Wo, and Misery, and Evil ? No, [From Me] 'tis answered : the Fountain of all Good, and Peace, and Joy, and Bliss Eternal. But How ? 'Tis hoped ; not without a Blessing with me. Nay : with a Curse ; [Accursed]. Whither then is it, I must go ? Into some other pleasant place, I trow. 'Tis, [Into Fire]

* Impenitentia est delictum maximum, & blasphemia irremissibilis. Bernh. sup. Cant. Serm. 38.

Chap. 6. That raging, scorching, and tormenting Element ! But *this*, I beseech thee, *not long to burn* ! However to be quench'd at last ! [*Into everlasting Fire.*] Must it go so hard ! At least vouchsafe that little solace of some *suitable company* to sympathize with, and pity me there ! Nor *that* shall be afforded thee. It was prepared for the Devil and his Angels.] There's the Society, now allowed thee ! Thou in thy life time hatedst *Holy Company*, as well as works of Holiness : and now thy deeds of darkness have associated thee unto the *Prince* thereof, and his *Infernal Crew* for ever. Take that Relief, they will afford thee ; who cannot find any other *Pleasure*, than in thy *Pains*. *This* is the *Lot* of *Unrepenting Sinners* ! And *Here*, the *Place* appointed for them ! *Gods Kingdom* hath * no such Subjects in it. *Know ye not* (saith the Apostle ; 'twere strange, indeed, if any Christian should thereof be ignorant) *That the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9. ?* Why ; Except a man be born again (you have our Saviours word for that) *he cannot*

* Nec ulla peccata ibi, nec peccatores erunt. Prosp. de vit. Cont. l. 1. c. 4.

see the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3. 3. One Chap. 4. Birth we must have ; I mean that of *Nature* ; ere we can come into any Earthly Kingdom. And *Another*, a * New One ; that is of *Grace* and *Holiness* ; is flatly necessary ere we can enter the Heavenly Kingdom. You see our Lord makes it an *utterly impossible thing*, otherwise. Nor are his Beloved Disciples words much short of his ; when he saith, that into the *Heavenly Jerusalem shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, nor whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lye*. The words are of *filthy Things* ; but the sense is plainly of *wicked and sinful Persons* : as appeareth by what follows ; But *they which are written in the Lambs Book of Life* : which, to be sure, are *Holy Ones* : Rev. 21. 27. And they alone have the *Passport* thither. As it is written. (Heb. 12. 14.) *Follow Peace— and Holiness* : without which ; namely *Holiness* : (as both the Number, and the Gender in the Greek evince it). *No man shall see God*. Now, if after all these Testimo-

* Scriptura evidens est, autoritas fundatissima est, fides catholicissima est : Omnis generatus damnatus ; Nemo liberatus, nisi Regeneratus. S. Aug. de verb. A post. Sermon. 14. Tom. 10.

Chap. 6. *nies*, it should be still expected, that I give some *Reasonable Account*, Why there is such Necessity of *Inherent Holiness* to *Eternal Happiness*; because that also is really more for Use, than Ornament; I shall not grudge to do it briefly in these three Particulars:

3 Reasons
of the ne-
cessity of
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First, *'Tis the Condition God hath pe-remptorily made.*

Secondly, *'Tis the Qualification Man doth absolutely need.*

Thirdly, *'Tis Part of Heaven; the very Entrance, and Beginning of it.*

1. Reason.

First, *'Tis the Condition God hath pe-remptorily made of our Eternal Happiness.* When we say Condition, the Meaning is, something to be performed by us (tho' not without the help of his special Grace indeed) whereon, his Gracious Promise of Everlasting Life shall be made good unto us; but in Case we fail therein, we are righteously disappointed of all benefit by the same. 'Tis true, Christs Satisfaction is the sole Foundation of our Pardon and Salvation. But we must know, that without Believing and Obeying him, which is the *Holiness* we are speaking of, God is resolved, None shall be for-
given

given; none shall be saved : and Chap. 6.
indeed, None can be said, Truly, to be
in Christ, or partake of him, otherwise,
2 Cor. 5. 17. Therefore, *as* our Lord
is said to be the the *Author of Eternal
Salvation*; so, 'tis restrained only to *all
them, that do obey him*, * Heb. 5. 9.
For them to expect the benefits of the
Death of Christ, that *live, and dye in
sin*; is equal *Folly*, with thinking that
a *Cordial* should revive a Dying Man,
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give God Laws; but to submit to those
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Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth, and is
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2. Reas. 2. *'Tis the Qualification Man doth absolutely need ; for the enjoying of it. The meaning is not here, in a Moral Sense ; (tho' that be true) ; as 'tis compliance with the Condition of Gods making : but, in a Natural Way ; He cannot else be capable to enjoy that Blessed State ; and Heaven would not be*
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Chap. 6. that serve for working such an *holy Temper* in the heart, are an *Heavy Burden* to him, here. Thence 'tis complained, *What-a weariness is it*, Mal. 1. 13? *When will the Sabbath be gone*, Amos 8. 5? And so; *Prayers, Sermons, and Sacraments*; are they not ended yet? All, are too long; and utterly tire them; as you see. What would be the *Frame of Spirit* it self, whereto these are but *Meanes*; supposing Sinners should be where the Highest Acts thereof should be exerted, and put forth; as 'tis in *heaven*? *Holiness* therefore is the *necessary Qualification of enjoying Bliss Eternal*. And doubtless the Apostle had an Especial respect to *That*, whatever else he might consider with it, when he gave God thanks, *For making of his People* * *Meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light*, Col. 1. 12.

* *A Naturâ inepti sumus ad regnum cælorum; aliouquin non esset opus, ut Deus nos faceret idoneos: id quod facit per Spiritum suum. Pſc. obs. ex ver. 12. Col. 1:*

3. Lastly, *Tis part of Heaven, the* Chap. 6.
very Entrance and Beginning of it. We 3. Reaf.
 heard before unto this purpose, and
 therefore now shall be very brief.
 There is no getting into the *Heart* of
 the City, but passing through the Sub- *Vid. Supr.*
urbs, and *Outparts* thereof. *Children* ch. 5.
 are not born *Adult*. They must be In- *Charact.*
fants, and *Youths*, ere they be *Grown* 6.
men. Whoever is a *Reader*, must
 know his *Syllables* and *Letters* first.
 And no man ever came to his *Journey's*
 end, that did not first *set out*. The
Top of *Jacobs Ladder* touched Hea-
 ven; but the *Bottom* stood upon the
 Earth. And no man getteth to the
uppermost Round thereof, but who first
 steps upon the *lowest*. And in Gods
Golden Chain, the first *visible Link* is
Effectual Calling, which doth intend
 the work of Holiness. Then *justifying*,
 whereby Sin is forgiving here; and
 lastly, *Glorifying*, whereby we are
 made happy for ever, *Rom. 8. 30.* This is
 Gods Order: and the *last Link* is never
 reached, but by the *first*. As we shall
 not get to the *Top* of the *Stairs*, with-
 out first treading on the *Bottom-Step*.
 And thus stands *Holiness* unto *Happiness*.
 Wherewith we shall conclude our last
 Argu-

Chap. 6. Argument for the Grand Importance of *Turning from our sin to God*; There is an *Indispensable necessity thereof, for escaping Hell, and getting into Heaven.*

And thus we have dispatch'd the *other Part* of the Proof, for the great Concernment of the *Substance of that Work and Duty* contained in the Text, and Proposition, *Real turning from sin to God*: The *Circumstance of Time*, [without delay] comes next.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Importance of the Circumstance of time : speedily, and without delay. 1. For Gods sake, who
 1. Absolutely requires it. 2. Infinitely deserves it, Considering
 1. What advantage he hath against a sinner. 2. How easie for him to take it. 3. Yet what a contrary Method he useth.
 4. And for none other reason than his meer compassion. For, 1. He needeth no man. 2. Gets nothing by any. 3. Could make ends to himself in just punishment of all Offenders.

WE are now to consider the great ^{2. Circumstance} Importance of the *Circumstance* of time : ^{Of great-est Consequence.} of time for the doing of this weighty Duty ; To turn from Sin to God : and that must be with speed, and without delay. ^{to turn without delay.} Our Holy Psalmist saith,
 He

Chap. 7. *He made haste, and delayed not* therein. And all men else should imitate him: not linger in a matter of such consequence; but make all possible haste to bring it to an happy issue. Could *Lot* be overspeedy in flying out of *Sodom*; when *Hell* was falling down from Heaven upon it; Fire and Brimstone, that is; to consume it? *Gen. 19.* 'Twas time for *Israel* to get them packing from the Tents of *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*; when the Earth was opening of her Mouth, to swallow them up. *Numb. 32.* And *Pharaoh* stays no longer, then; *when the first born were slain, that is;* but gets him up at midnight, to urge and thrust out *Israel*; lest a few Minuts trifling longer should make them All dead men. *Exod. 12.* Now all these Instances are somewhat proper; tho, I confess, too faint, and defective shadows and resemblances of the desperate danger wherein Sinners are: And this is evident enough by the past Discourse. Ought they not therefore to make hast, and not delay the turning from their sin? Should not *Christ Jesus* presently be imbraced; and his *Holy Gospel* forthwith be obeyed by them?

'Tis most undoubtedly, of greatest
confe-

consequence to them, to be thus engaged ; to be up and doing on this 3 fold Account. 1. For Gods sake ; 2. For other mens ; 3. and Lastly, For their Own.

1. For the sake of God. And that he is deeply concerned in respect of Him to do so, shall be evinced by these two Considerations. 1. God doth absolutely require it : 2. Doth infinitely deserve it from him.

1. God doth absolutely require a sinner forthwith to forsake his Iniquity, come to Christ, and obey the Gospel. Remember he that made us, the work of whose hands we are ; that keepeth and preserveth us ; for we are also the Sheep of his pasture ; that hath the absolute Sovereignty and Dominion over us ; and will shortly judge the World in righteousness ; when it shall be rendred unto all men according to their deeds ; He, the Almighty God ; expects a sinners present turning from his evil waies unto himself ! And this is manifest, could we say no more, by his strict charge upon them, to leave their wickedness at his first warning of them ; and sore complaint against them, with high offence at them, for their neglect of present

con-

Chap. 7. *compliance* with him. Doth not he command, to *Turn at his reproof*,* *Pro. 1. 23?* And not to put him to the trouble of a second Summons? But forthwith to hear him, when he calls; and answer, whilst he speaketh to them? What meaneth else that challenge, *v. 22. How long ye simple Ones will you love simplicity*, (tis sinful folly there intended); and *scorners delight in scorning?* God takes it for no less affront then *scorn of him*, to make him wait their leisure, and to give further warning to them. What think you; is it not an Argument of high displeasure, when he accosts the Sinner in so rough a manner; *Wo unto thee; wilt thou not be made clean; when shall it once be*, *Jer. 13. ult?* How often must thy duty be rounded in thy ears? How long must my patience be put to't by thee? Shall I not call thee to a sad reckoning for this vile neglect? What else can seem to be the import of this smart rebuke? Surely it must cost men dear at last! For, *Pro. 1. 24, 25, 26, 28. Because I have called and ye refused—Ye have set at nought my Counsel, and would*

* *Resipiscite, me increpante.* Gejer. ap. Pol. Syn. *Re-
deatis resipiscitis ad meam increpationem.* Merc. in loc.

none of my reproof. I also will laugh at Chap. 7.
your calamity.—They shall call, and I
will not answer: seek me early, but not
find me. Here is a payment threatned
 in their own Coyn. They would not
 heed him, when he called to Repen-
 tance: and he will not help them, when
 they cry for deliverance. Sufficient
 proof, that God neither can, nor will
 bear with delays in turning from Ini-
 quity: but looks for present comply-
 ance in the Case. But you have also
 His expresse command hereto. Com-
 pare *Pf.* 95. 7, 8, with *Heb.* 3. 7, 15;
 and you shall find him peremptory in
 this point. *To day* (before to mor-
 row) *if you will hear his voice* (that is,
 if you do mean to do it at all) *harden*
not your hearts. What doth this amount
 unto; but, *If you ever intend to leave*
your sins, I charge you, Begin this day;
and venture not to put it off unto another,
tho the next. The Apostle seems to
 give a plain reason for it, *2 Cor.* 6. 2.
Now (not hereafter) *is the accepted*
time, with God, that is: *Now* (and
 not any other time, for ought that
 we can tell) *is the day of Salvation.* So
 that your Repentance must be *Now,*
 or *Never*; for any assurance we can
 give

Chap. 7. give you to the contrary. If the present opportunity be lost, for ought that any man can say, *Gods Blessing will be lost for ever.* Our Blessed Lord once said upon another occasion, *Remember Lots Wife*: and truly upon this I must say to sinners, *Remember Esau.* A sad Example! For afterwards *when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected; though he sought it carefully with tears, Heb. 12. 17.* But hereof, more hereafter. We see that God absolutely requireth *Present Turning.* And so,

2. consideration.

2. *He doth infinitely deserve it.* Who can make a doubt, whether God doth * abundantly merit, that the Devils service should be forthwith quitted, for his sake, who is the Author of mens Being, and all the Mercies they enjoy? Did *Satan* make thee, Sinner? Doth he preserve thee? Is he a doing good unto thee every moment? Art thou so sottish, as not to know, or not consider, that thou art a Debtor unto him for nothing, but the *highest mischief* done, or design'd against thee perpetually? Is he not thy *certain, restless,*

* *Neque enim necessitatibus tantummodo nostris provisum est: usq; in delicias armamur. Sen. de Ben. l. 4. c. 5.*
and

and *implacable Enemy*: that * *like a* Chap. 7.
roaring Lyon walks about, seeking whom
he may devour. 1 Pet. 5. 8. And should'st
 thou then be any longer a willing Sub-
 ject, Slave, and Vassal to him? But
 unto God Almighty, how do *we all*
 owe, both our selves, our present
 Comforts, and our future Hopes? And
 what a bountiful Benefactor is he to the
 worst of sinners, every day, and hour,
 and minute? And should he not enjoy
 the present, utmost service thou canst
 do him? Do but consider seriously, I
 beseech thee, how ill thou dost deserve
 from God; yet with what patience,
 kindness, and indulgence, to amaze-
 ment, he doth trust thee notwithstand-
 ing; and surely 'twill not be possible
 for thee to refuse immediate devotion
 of thy self to his Obedience. Suffer me
 to help thy Meditations in this business,
 by a brief suggestion of 3, or 4 Particu-
 lars to thee. 1. *What advantage he* Four Me-
bath upon thee; 2. *How easie 'tis for* ditations
him to take it; 3. *Yet what a contrary*

* *Circuit ille nos singulos, & tamquam hostis clausas ob-
 sidens, muros explorat, et tentat, an sit pars aliqua minus-
 stabilis, & minus fida, cujus aditu ad interiora pene-
 tretur.* Cypr. de Zel. & Livor. ubi ejusmodi multo
 plura lectuq; dignissima.

Chap. 7. *Method is used by him; 4. Tho for no other reason in the world, but his own meer compassion.*

I. Medi-
tation.

I. *Think what advantage, Sinners, you have put into Gods hands, have done it often, a long while together; and do it still unto this day; for his severest justice to cut you off, and cast you into eternal torments? Are you not the seed of evil Doers; and Children that are Corrupters, Es. 1. 4? Were you not shapen in Iniquity, and conceived in sin, Ps. 51. 5. Being by Nature * Children of Wrath! Eph. 2. 3. Have you not lived in Rebellion, and are, even now, open and declared Enemies against him? For who will plead that Ignorance, as not to know that a state of sin is a state of Enmity and Rebellion against God? And how Traytors should be handled; what Treason doth deserve, with Mortal Princes; is needless to be mentioned. But certainly High Treason, and Open Rebellion against the King of Kings, is a Crime most Capital: and gives most just occasion for the severest Vengeance upon such Offenders. This is the Uncon-*

* *Digni & obnoxii ira ac vindictæ Dei. Druf.*

verted Sinners Case: and thus he lays Chap. 7.
himself obnoxious to Divine Displeasure.

2. Think further, what an *ease* 2. Meditation.
matter 'tis for God to wreak his Wrath
upon you to the * uttermost. Do
you not *All* lye at Mercy to him? Are
you not as Chaff before the Whirl-
wind; and dryed stubble before the
raging Flames? Is there any resisting
of an *Almighty*; or flying from an *Om-
nipotent* God? Can not he be avenged
on the craftiest, stoutest, and most
powerful sinner, when, and how he
pleaseth? Let him but once speak the
word; *Ah, I will ease me of mine Ad-
versaries, and avenge me of mine Ene-
mies,* (Es. i. 24.) Pray what, or who
shall hinder him? Lord, (quoth the
Holy *Psalmist*, *who may stand in thy
sight, when once thou art angry?* Ps.
67: 7. And the Prophet *Nahum* saith,
*The Mountains quake at him, the Hills
melt, and the Earth is burnt at his pre-
sence; yea the World, and they that dwell
therein.* ch. i. 5. *Who can stand before
his Indignation?* Thus to provoke,

* *Valet ima summis Mutare, & insignem attenuat
Deus, Obscura promens.* Hor. Carm. i. Od. 34.

Chap. 7. and thus to lye at Mercy ! What *folly* ; *madness* is it : not to turn immediately !

3. Meditation.

3. Think again, what a *contrary Method* is used with you. With what long sufferance ; with what loving kindness ; doth the *abused*, and *Almighty Majesty* deal with you ? If a man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away ; was said once with amazement, by a guilty Conscience, finding in its own opinion, undeserved favour ? Ought you not, with greater reason far, thus to bethink you towards God ? He dealeth so by you ! And ought it not to draw your * hearts to him ? Why, Sinners ; you are not yet in Hell ! You are on this side of the Grave, still ! But in Gods hands to be dealt with at his own discretion ! *Astonishing Mercy* ! Yea surely, 'tis nothing else but the *Lords Mercies that ye are not consumed : because his compassions do not fail*, Lament. 3. 22. Nay : they are new every morning, v. 23. The Gospel is still continued with you ! The *Doore of Hope* kept open to you ! And the *Golden Scepter* held out before you !

* Deum ad hoc patientem esse, ut nos pœniteat peccati nostri & reformemur. S. Cypr. Test. l. 3. 35.

Long, and long, have you slighted Chap. 7.
 the *Blond of Jesus, and Word of Grace*
from Christ: but yet he calleth still.
All the day long have I spread forth my
hand to a Rebellious People, Es. 65. 2.
 You have grieved the Holy Spirit; sti-
 fled your own Convictions; and cho-
 sen to walk in darkness: yet we do
 not doubt but the Holy Spirit is still
 striving in you; and are sure, you are
 not yet cast into utter darkness. Tho
 you have thrust your Saviour out of
 Doores, and shut them fast upon him;
 yet he *standeth* there, and *knocketh still*,
Revel. 3. 20. This is your case, O sin-
 ners, and ought you any longer to de-
 lay your turning unto him?

4. Think lastly, For *how little*, and 4. Medi-
tation.
no reason in the VWorld, besides Gods
meer compassion, he takes this merciful
 course, and deals so Graciously with
 you. Had the Almighty any * need
 of such poor things as you are; or
 were he any Gainer by this kind usage
 of you; or could he not make good
 ends unto his Glory by the smartest

* *Omnia sine mercede; sine ullo ad ipsum perveniente
 commodo Deus facit. — Gratuitum habemus. — Nam &
 sceleratis Sol oritur, & Piratis patent maria. Sen. de
 Ben. c. 4. l. 25.*

Chap. 7. proceedings with you ; something might be said, to bate, at least, some little of your infinite Obligations for present turning to him. But there is room for none of these things *here*.

I. God
needs
you not.

I. God *hath no need at all of you ;* or any other Creature in the World. All other Beings are intirely dependent upon him : but he is absolutely Independent : and hath all Perfections in himself alone. He, that at the first made all things out of nothing, for his own good Will and Pleasure, can with ease repair, or re-create them ; were they again annihilated. And tho the whole Creation be wholly at his service, as he pleaseth to use it: yet when he calls on men to leave their Sin, to *serve and worship* him : 'tis not, because there is any * necessity thereof to him, and he could not be without it. For then how could he be *God blessed in himself for evermore ?* Therefore, *Acts 17. 25.* 'Tis Saint Pauls Doctrine, God is *not worshipped with mens hands,* (no, nor with their Hearts, neither) *as tho he needed any thing.* The Reason follows ; *since he giveth Life, and Breath, and*

* *Nullius rei metu, penitentiæ Deus supplicium differt.* Plut. *De his qui sero, &c.*

all things else to all. No ; no : Were the Earth removed ; the Sea grown dry ; and the Sun quite darkned ; God were all One for ever. The Psalmist truly saith to him, *Thou art the same ; (when these are not) ; and thy years shall have no end,* Ps. 102. 27.

2. *Gets nothing by you.* As nothing ^{2. Gets nothing by you.} really can be subtracted from ; so nothing can be added to *Jehovah*, by all the Creatures. Lands, Monies, Trades, and Friends may make men Gainers in this World. But themselves, and those things, and the whole World beside, can *properly* bring no Profit unto God at all. I would but ask it : what advantage will arise from one little Grain of sand, being put unto a Mighty Mountain ? Or from one drop of water, cast into the Sea ? Or from a farthing Candle lighted, to the Glorious Sun ? And yet *here's* some proportion, tho but little, between these things. But there is none betwixt *all Creatures*, and the *Great Creator*. How then should any *real* Benefit to the Almighty arise from us. *Job 22. 2. Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself ?* No ; that he can not ; is the meaning of the Que-

Chap. 7. *stion. Wise men* may increase their their Honours, Riches, and their Wisdom too. But *all men* cannot do such service to the * *Almighty*, and *All-sufficient God*. We have not any thing for him, but what we borrow from him; and indeed, what is *his own*, 1 Chron. 29. 14. But had we ought besides, and would impart the same: Full Vessels will receive no more: and *Infinite fulness dwells in God*.

3. Can
make end
in the pu-
nishment.

3. He can make *Ends unto himself*, by Sinners punishment. Thy Ruine may raise his Name: and the Glory of his Justice will be advanced in taking vengeance on an Incurable Wretch; as thou approvest thy self. We read in *Nehem.* 9. 10, that God gat *himself a Name*, in his righteous punishment of the refractory *Egyptians*. And he proposeth the gaining *honour to himself upon Pharaoh, his host, chariots, and horsemen*, by overwhelming them in the Sea, for their * *audacious*, and incurable wickedness, *Exod.* 14. 17. So also

* *Nec Deus collato eget, nec Nos ei quicquam conferre possumus. Sen. de Ben. l. 4. c. 8. Nulla ex nobis utilis Deo speranda est. Idem. c. 3. * Ζεύς ὁ καλῶς ἑστὶν ἄγαν ὑπερβόων. Nec ulla materia dignior, in qua vim suam ostendet. Grot.*

his Judgment upon the *Great Whore*, Chap. 7. caused the Heavenly Host to sing *Allelujah* to him : ascribing *Salvation, Glory, and Honour and Power to the Lord* their God, Rev. 19. 1, 2, And is it not a Renowned thing in *Magistrates* to apprehend, and punish Malefactors ; who invade the properties, and disturb the peace and quiet of their Neighbors, and his Subjects ? As it is likewise, highly Honourable in a King, to Chastize *open Enemies*, who in hostile manner invade his Country ; Plunder, and Butcher his People ; strike at himself, not only in his Crown and Dignity, but very Throat, and Life too. Thus, and no better, Sinners deal with God ; the Sovereign of the World. And if they will not be reclaimed, 'tis Just and Glorious in him, to bring them to their deserved Punishment.

Yet the Almighty spareth *You*, and *Me* : deales infinitely better with us, than we do deserve ! What is it, think you, for ? Is he thus *Gracious* ; that you may turn his Grace into wantonness ? Doth he forbear his *Vengeance* on them ; that sinners may forbear and delay their *Repentance* towards him ? This is to be worse, than very Spiders !

To

Chap. 7. To turn, not only Food, but Antidotes into Poysons! *Gods goodnes* (saith the Apostle) *is to lead thee to repentance,* Rom. 2. 4. That he spares thee *so long,* should have this effect; that thou live *not one minute longer* in offending him. And since he both *Requireth absolutely,* and so *Infinitely Deserveth* present Compliance with him: thou shouldst *make hast, and not delay to Turn from sin unto him.* And this is the first Account, where-upon the sinner is so greatly concern'd to *turn immediately from his sin to God.* The second followes.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

2. For Mans sake : 'twill serve thy Neighbour : 1. Step of Service is, it gives an open rebuke to Sin. 2. Plucks down a chief Pillar of Impiety. 3. Often prevaieth to Conversion of others. 4. Is very useful to the Converted.

2. **I**T stands the Sinner much upon, ^{2. Account} forthwith to turn to God for the sake of Men, his Neighbours. There is great Duty which we owe to them ; and that by * *Moral-Natural Obligations*. As we must love the Lord our God with all our Heart ; and that is the Sum and Substance of the first Table : so, to love our Neighbour as our self, is of the second. Now if the Present Turning from your Sin, be not only due, (as you heard) upon most valuable Reasons, towards God: but is like to prove of great, and singular use and service to your

* Non nobis solum nati sumus : partem patria, partem parentes, partem amici sibi vendicant. Plaut.

Neigh.

Chap. 8. Neighbour likewise (as will anon appear) : certainly then, your obligation thereunto is stronger, and the Importance thereof greater to you. And what an hopeful tendency to the good of others an *Holy Life* is furnished with, you may easily guess by our *Saviours* Speech, * *Mat. 5. 16. Let your light so shine before men ; that they seeing your good works, may glorifie your Father which is in heaven.* Christ's Sermon on the Mount, whereof this is a part, was preached unto his *Disciples* ; but, be not mistaken ; that word meaneth not the *Twelve alone* ; but *All that followed him* to hear his Doctrine ; and they were *Multitudes*, as is manifest both, *ver. 1. chap. 5.* and most plainly, *chap. 7. 28.* and *chap. 8. 1.* So that, whoever profess to follow Christ (as do the *Chief* of Sinners amongst us) They are all, without more ado, to let their light shine before others : and that is specially, (to be sure) the *light of holiness in their lives*, as the next words [seeing their good works] doth

* "Ενεργον κηδεον τιθηναι, &c. He adds another advantage, with mens Salvation : viz. that it will make them industrious, and studious of virtue to the uttermost. You shall not only mend the World by a good Life : but dispose them to Glorifie God. Chrys. Hom. 15. in 5 Mat. necessa-

necessarily evince. And then there Chap. 8.
 can be no pretence for *staying longer in*
their sins ; but they must be forsaken
presently by them. And how direct a
 Tendency this hath to the good and
 benefit of others, is evident hence ;
 That it will prove the Occasion, of
 their rendring and ascribing Praise and
 Glory unto the God of Heaven [*may*
glorifie your father which is in heaven] ?
 Which certainly, at the least, may be
 said to go a great way towards, and
 border close upon, a sound Conversi-
 on, with them. This point is no less
 manifest, in mine opinion, by St. Pe-
 ters words, 1 Epist. 2. 11, 12. *Abstain*
from fleshly Lusts : that's *present duty*,
 according to the holy Apostle. And
 why ? First, for your *own* sakes ; *They*
War against the Soul ; strike at your
 very hearts, that is. Then, for your
Neighbours sakes : that, whereas they
 are apt to think, and speak against Re-
 ligion ; Now by your good works which
 they shall behold, they may glorifie God,
 in the day of Visitation ; i. e. Theirs, or
 Yours ; or perhaps, of Both. And
 how great advantage (by the plainest
 implication here) will a speedy Course
 of leaving sin, and leading of an holy
 Life,

Chap. 8. not only bring unto *our selves*, but unto *Others* also, with whom we do converse?

But I am willing to be more particular in the pursuit of this useful peece of Doctrine; and shew, how *Apt* the *Present turning from sin, and living holily* is, to be of singular Use and Service unto *Others* likewise, in the several *Steps*, and *Progress* that it makes thereto.

I. Step. I. The lowest degree of good it doth, (and surely that is far from being contemptible in any *Wise* and *Good Mans Eye*) is, That it *giveth an open rebuke to wickedness*, in the very face of it; tho' it be so past all shame, and daring in this naughty World: and beareth a manifest, and I may say, publick Testimony against the same. For, *Sirs*, your speedy flight from sin, what other construction can be put upon it, but that, whatever kind opinion others may have for it, yet you, for your own parts, judge not otherwise thereof, and truly render it, by your present running from it, as indeed it is, a *very Plague-sore*; or rather *Pesthouse*, fill'd therewith. Were there not *Mortal Mischief*

Mischief in it ; wherefore should you Chap. 8.
not longer with content, and pleasure,
continue with it ? Your practice saith,
It is so bad, there's none abiding with it.
And this Behaviour, as it cannot escape
Mens observation ; so it must make
them *Think*, and that to *Wonder*, what
should be the reason of it. The Pro-
phet *Isaiah* long ago seemeth to take
notice hereof ; to be sure, of the lat-
ter Act. For saith he, Chap. 8. 18. *I,*
and the children whom the Lord hath gi-
ven me, are (understand, by flying
from the way of wickedness) *for signs*
and wonders. Whom the Apostle *Peter*
(somewhat more fully) seemeth to
explain. For 1 *Epist.* 4. 4. he telleth
us : that Mens *Thoughts hereby* would
be engaged, as well as their *Wonder*
raised. *They think it strange* (do un-
godly Men) *that ye run not with them*
to the same excess of Riot. Is it not,
think we, unto this purpose ? *What*
*ailles * these men to run from sin, faster*
than they would do from death ? There is

* *Videbunt, & timebunt sequi vias malas, cum vident*
quosque meliores jam elegisse vias bonas. Et dicunt in a-
nimo suo non frustra hæc eunt illi ; quando eunt quo nos ire
volamus. Et quare cum magnâ fiduciâ hæc eunt, nisi
quia illuc ire perniciosum est ? Aug. in Psalm 39.

Chap. 8. *some worser matter in it surely than e're we hitherto thought of! They once had fondness for it equal with our own! To hate that mortally, which they sometimes lov'd so dearly; cannot be for nothing! What great thing is the reason of it? I am sure, It hath a natural tendency to such Considerations; whether those the Apostle speaketh of were so affected, or no. And Consideration, to Conversion, is at least as much as the Needle to the Thread. And then what benefit is there hence?*

2. Step. 2. Further, It *plucks down a chief Pillor in Iniquities Fabrique; and withdraweth one of mens greatest Encouragements to proceed in wickedness. Single Persons do not use to be so bold, and venturous in any attempts of danger; as when they are in Company. Even Barak refuseth to goe up against Sisera, unless Deborah would go with him. Jldg. 4. And a great Trade is not usually undertaken without a Partner. For the Preachers observation is generally, and for good reason, much regarded. Two are better than One, for if they fall, the one will help up his Fellow: but woe to him that is alone. Eccles. 4. 9, 10. Whereby 'tis evident that*

that *Company*, or *Society* is a great Encouragement and Confirmation in any * adventure whatsoever. We see 'tis daily so in the very worst of Practices, the *works of wickedness*. When therefore any sinner shall be reclaimed, and forthwith quit his former evil courses; there is one stake plucked up; and *Satans* fence will be the easier trodden down. But the Example of *those mens forsaking sin*, whose Places, or Behaviour have gotten them Reputation, is yet more significant to this purpose. Hereupon *Magistrates, Ministers, Parents, Masters, and Considerable Neighbours*, have a mighty influence on other mens Conversation, unto the better, or the worse side. You know how 'twas urged against Obedience unto Christ, *John 7*, Have *any of the Rulers, or the Pharisees believed on him?* That is to say; *these* are the leading men; and *those* you ought to follow. So she pleaded to defend her Superstition; that *their Fathers worshipped in that Mountain, Job. 4*. Wherein she is followed by many Thousand others. On the other hand, if a *Gamaliel*, a

* *Nullius boni sine socio jucunda possessio. Sen. Ep. 6. Quidni, & Mali iidem?*

Chap. 8. *Doctor of Law, and one had in reputation, be adverse to Wickedness; others will soon agree with him, Acts 5. 34, 40. And when the Priests shall prove obedient to the Faith; the Gospel then is likely to increase. ch. 6. 7. Men easily, and naturally infer from such observations, to this purpose: surely there is more good in Holiness, and worser evil in Sin, than we were e're aware of; else men of such Prudence and Sagacity as These are, would not so soon have left the one, and taken up the other, as they did; who were so lately just the same we were. Nay, Equals, so forsaking Wickedness, will lay a present check on men, and be apt to stop their carier in Naughtiness, and make them halt, as men amazed at the matter. And this was the Effect of S. Pauls * sudden Conversion, Acts. 9. 21. Which is apparently a further degree of Good unto Men. It puts them, as you first heard, upon considering; and then, stops their carier in Evil. Your present leaving sin, is apt to both these issues.*

3. Step.

3. *It often works on others also unto a*

Q. d. *An etiam Saul inter Prophetas! Grot.*

speedy

Speedy and real Conversion. There is Chap. 8.
 abundant Proof of this to be found in
 Ecclesiastical story. I shall only ob-
 serve, that when S. *Austin*, who before
 had lead a very bad and naughty Life
 a long while together, by his own con-
 fession; when he, I say, was wrought
 upon to stay no longer in the Tents of
 Wickedness, his Friend * *Alipius*, and
 his Son *Adeodate* bear him Company in
 listning under *Jesus Christ*. When *An-*
drew, *Simon Peters* Brother, had once
 found our Saviour; the next news is,
 his Brother *Peter* seeks him too: And
 when *Philip* became a sudden Prose-
 lyte, *Nathaniel* standeth off not long
 after him, *John* 1. And I cannot doubt,
 but some of you (that hear of this) may
 have sometimes made, your selves, like
 observations. Hath it not been some-
 what frequent (through Gods mercy
 in our naughty Age; that upon * one
 Brother's Friend's, or Neighbour's,
 flying from Iniquity, some other Bro-
 ther, Friend, or Neighbour hath taken
 thence occasion to consider of his waies,
 and turn him forthwith from his Sin to
Jesus Christ? Thanks be to God that

* *Ex Aug. confess. l. 9. c. 6.* * *Unius exemplo corri-*
guntur plurimi. Ambros.

Chap. 8. this is no *Black Swan* amongst us: not an Uncouth and *Unusual*; but somewhat a *Familiar* Blessing with us. Especially, that *Governours* of Families, and other Societies, proving themselves, with speed and truth, Religious, should be very useful to draw on others. We read it too in Holy Scriptures, that *Cornelius* being so; his house feared God, together with him, *Act. 10. 2.* So *Crispus* believed, and his Family followed him in it, *ch. 18. 8.* And the *Goalers* speedy Conversion, was forthwith effectual with them that appertained to him, *ch. 16. 31.* And this was the very reason, why the Apostle was so earnest against a Believers departure, from an Unbelieving Wife or Husband. *What knowest thou, saith he, O Wife whether thou shalt savethy Husband; tho' thy Superiour? Or, O Man, Whether thou shalt save thy Wife?* That is, be the occasion of *Conversion*, and so *Salvation*, in either Case. Now, tho' verbal *Instruction* (according to our Capacity) is not to be excluded: yet the *teachings* of an * *Holy Conversation*, particular-

* Plato & Aristoteles plus ex moribus, quam ex verbis Socratis, traxit. Sen. Ep. 6. Homines amplius oculis quam auribus credunt. Id. Ibim.

ly on the *Wife's* part, is what the *Apostle* Chap. 8. *Peter* proposeth, as effectual to this purpose, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1, 2.

Think then, O sinner, if thy *Hasting from Iniquity* (besides the benefit thence accruing to thine own Soul) shall prove so useful to thy Neighbour, as to be a likely mean for his *Eternal Good*; how dost thou stand obliged to the Doing so?

4. In the last place, 'Tis very serviceable likewise to those that are already ^{4. Step.} Converted. For it both fills * their Souls with joy; makes them bless God on thy behalf; and strengthens more and builds them up in the good waies of God. How *can good men* forbear to rejoyce on the behalf of Converted sinners; when the *Holy Angels* are thus affected at it, *Luk.* 15. 10? When *Paul* and *Barnabas* declared the *marvellous Conversion* of the Gentiles; they caused great joy to all the Brethren, *Act.* 15. 3. God likewise shall have praises from them on this account. That he takes pity upon other Souls, as well as on their own, is alwaies matter of thanks-giving to them. Thus

* In plerisque, justus aspectus jam monitio correctionis est; perfectioribus, latitio est. Amb. in *Psal.* 118.

Chap. 8. *Paul* giveth thanks for the Conversion of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Ep. 1. 2. And saith *he was alwaies bound to do so*, 2 Ep. 2. 13. And so he tells us of himself, that when God wonderfully of a Persecutor had turned him into a Preacher, other Christians *Glorified God in him*. Gal. 1. ult. And to conclude, this strengthens and builds up Saints in the good waies of God. Here is *one VVitnes* more unto that Truth, whereof they were before assured. And *store* is no *store*. Nay, *Many* makes the Confidence *more*. That mortal Enemies to the waies of Holiness, should strangely turn their Faithful Friends; what confirmation must it give the Old Abettors of them? Then, saith the Text (*Act. 9. 31.*) when *Saul* miraculously became a *Paul*, the *Devils* slave *Christs* Servant; the Church was *Edified*, and also *Multiplied*.

And thus, the Good of Others doth oblige Men forthwith to forsake the works of darkness, and to become obedient unto Jesus Christ without delay. It should be done, as on the Account of *God*; so too, of *Men*. And sure, you can't but say, 'Tis very hate-

hateful, to be like that *wicked Judge*, Chap. 9.
 who *feared not God, nor regarded men* :
 and therefore see that you turn from
 following him, by *Turning from your*
sin immediately.

CHAP. IX.

3. For your own sake. 1. Considera-
 tion : Are accursed in present state.
 2. Have been too long in sins ser-
 vice, Considering, 1. What a
 deal of work they have : 2. What
 an Inch of Time : 3. How weak
 their strength : 4. And how many
 their Lets. Then 3. Delay, more
 indisposeth for hereafter ; 1. From
 the nature of the thing. 2. From
 the Judgment of God.

3. **L** Astly, Sinners For their own sakes 3. Account
 (which indeed comes nearest to
 them) are concerned greatly, to make

Chap. 9. all hast, and not delay in turning from their Sin to Christ. And there are these 5, or 6 Considerations, that will evince this fully. *They are most miserable where they are ; Have been too long already at serving Sin ; And, longer stay more indisposeth to the forsaking it ; Nay, the Neglect of Present Turning is now Mischievous dreadfully ; Yea, and by delay they only Treasure up wrath unto themselves ; And, if they turn not now, it is justly to be feared, 'twill never be done at all.*

1. Consideration.

1. Sinners should presently turn, for their own sakes ; *because they are most miserable, and accursed in their present state. Who, in his senses, then, but will infer, 'tis of the highest consequence, 'Presently to be rid thereof? If you will ponder seriously your Condition, sinners ; you will quickly find it a great deal worse, and far more dangerous, than Lot's was, whilst he stayed in Sodom. And yet a few Minutes longer delay had made him fuel for that Fire and Brimstone, which fell down from heaven upon the place. Is not Gods Curse gone forth against you ! And are you not Dead Men in law already ! Is it not written, Cursed is every one that*
contin-

continueth not in all things written in the Chap. 9.
book of the law to do them. Gal. 3. 10?

And, that *He that believeth not, is condemned already : yea, and the wrath of*
** God abideth on him,* Joh. 3. 18, 36? 'Tis evident then, that the Sentence is already past ; tho' Execution doth not instantly follow it. What if *Divine Patience* shall reprieve thee for a little season? Thou art still but like a Malefactor standing on the Ladder, who next moment (for ought thou knowest) mayst be turned off, and perish. You know, that all Men tread upon the brink of Eternity ; and that our house of clay is mouldring apace about our Ears ! *You*, of all others, methinks, who are *lame, or sick, or both ;* and daily converse with them that are in far worse Case than your selves, need not to be remembred hereof. Is it not high time for *You* to take some care for your Immortal Souls? And when, I pray, can that be done unto best purpose, if *now* it be neglected? Is not your present Case most bad : and doth not that

* *Non dixit, ira Dei venit ad eum ; sed manet super eum. Omnes qui nascuntur mortales, habent secum iram Dei. -- Qui ergo non vult credere, ira Dei manet super eum.* Aug. Tract. 14. in John. 3.

Chap. 9. require the best present care about it ? Present Misery, doth it not urge to seek for present Remedy ? He, whose Estate is in question, speeds him to his Lawyer. They, who are very sick, send forthwith for the Physician. And a Woman in Travel calls the Midwife instantly. Here they all say, *Delay is dangerous !* Who, I beseech you, thinks he is relieved too soon ? Did you ever hear a starving *Beggar* think, his wants supplied too quickly ? Or a *Prisoner* say, he was sent out of Jail with too much speed ? Or any *Malefactor* make complaint, that his Pardon came too fast unto him ? No ; no : in matters of these Natures, all men hasten after succour ; and with all their might. Every Minute of delay is a long hour with them ; and every hour a day ; and every day a week, or month, or year ! But to escape the just Displeasure of Almighty God, and to Turn from sin and become New Creatures, in Order thereunto ; they think, *for minding this*, 'tis time enough * hereafter. Thus

* *Cras hoc fiet. Idem cras fiet, Quid ? quasi magnum : Nempe diem, donas— !* Perf. Sat. 5.

are our Saviours words made good, *The Children of this World are wiser in their generation, than the Children of light,* Luk. 16. Nay those very Persons, who shew themselves so wise for *Earth*, are yet stark fools for *Heaven* ! Ought these things so to be ? Should sinners be longer thus delaying in there return to God ?

2. They *have been long enough already, and too too long, at serving sin* ; and thereby making sottish wast of that precious Time, which God vouchsafed to them for far better purposes. Let me put it, sinner, to thy Conscience, in the fear and sight of God ; Hast thou not by so many years continuance (it may be 20, 30, 40 years, or more) in ignorance of, and disobedience to the Gospel, dishonoured God *long enough*, served the Devil *long enough*, and indangered thy *soul long enough* ? Hast thou not *long enough* turn'd a deaf Ear to the loud Calls, and Knockings of *Jesus Christ* ; *long enough* grieved the *Holy Spirit* ; *long enough* stifled the Convictions of thine *own Conscience* ; and *long enough* slighted, and scorned the Counsels and Intreaties of *Faithful Ministers,*

2. Consideration.

Chap. 9. *nisters*, and *pious* * *Friends*; and so, by all these unhappy Methods, *long enough* been treasuring up to thy self Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and securing everlasting ruine to thy *Soul and Body*? Surely, thou canst not but readily and sorrowfully acknowledge with the Apostle *Peter*, 1 Epist. 4. 3. *The time past of our lives may suffice to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in Lasciviousness, Lusts, excess of Wine; Revellings, and the like.* 'Tis now high time to take another Course; to delay no longer; but instantly forsaking Sin, to turn to *Jesus Christ*, and attend that great business, thou camest into the World about. I must be confident, that you cannot but conclude, that *forthwith* you ought to bestir your selves unto this purpose: especially, when to what hath been already spoken, you add the serious thoughts of these 3, or 4 Things more: *What a deal of necessary work is lying on your hands; How little time you have to do it in; How weak your strength is for the discharging it;*

* *Cras vives: hodie jam vivere, Postume, serum est. Ille sapit, quisquis, Postume, vixit huius.* Mart. Epigr. l. 5. 59.

and What a world of hinderances are in Chap. 9.
your way.

I. What a * deal of necessary work is lying on your hands ; as ever you expect to avoid Eternal Misery, and to be partakers of Everlasting Bliss. To get a Mind inlightened and instructed in the knowledge of your Duty, and observation of the horrible failures you have made in the performance of the same. To get a broken, and a Contrite Spirit, because you have offended, so often, and so long together, and with so high an hand, a *Gracious*, yet most *Righteous*, *Almighty*, and *All-seeing God*. To get an Heart renewed, that shall be willing and ready to take up the Yoke of Christ, receive him both for *Lord and Saviour* ; and account all his waies to be waies of pleasantness, and none of his Commandements grievous. To have a * Conversation suitable unto, and ordered by the Word of God ; that you may have your fruities unto ho-

* *Gentes facilius est barbaras, impatientesque alieni arbitrii regere ; quam animum suum continere, & tradere sibi. Sen. de Ben. l. 5. c. 7. * Seipsum quam hostem superare multo operosius est. Val. M. l. 4. de Camil.*

Chap. 9. *lines, and the end everlasting Life. And in order to all this, to be serious, diligent, and constant in hearing, reading, Meditation, and Prayer; in watching over your thoughts, affections, senses, discourse, and actions; that Divine Assistance may be received, and your Performances graciously crowned and rewarded. And is not this a deal of necessary work! Well therefore doth the Apostle describe the 3 Theological Graces, which comprehend whole Christianity; by the Work of Faith, labour of Love, and Patience of Hope, 1 Thess. 1. 3. and bid us * work out our Salvation with fear and trembling, Phil. 2. 12.*

2. VVhat
an Inch of
time to do
it in.

2. *VVhat an Inch of time, you have to do it in. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand; as the Apostle speaketh to the Romans, 13. 12. Therefore 'tis high time to awake out of sleep. Or as our Saviour said of himself, I must work the workes of him that sent me, whilst it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work, John 9. 4. That is,*

* Peragite: non enim simpliciter dixit *ἔργα*, sed *κατεργάζεσθε*: q. d. quo cursu cepistis, eodem contendite ad metam: nam *κατεργάζεσθε* est rem inchoatam effectam & perfectam dare. Grot. in loc.

the *night* of * *natural Death*, here ; as Chap. 5.
 'twas, the *night* of a *Life* of *ignorance*,
 before. *There is no work, nor device,*
nor wisdom, nor knowledge in the Grave
whereto thou goest, Eccles. 9. 10. Indeed,
 whereto we all are hastning, and ride
 post. Is it time for men to linger,
 then? Your *Glass* is running apace ;
 and there are but a few sands behind.
 Your *Lamp* is almost spent ; and there
 is but † little Oyl remaineth for the
 feeding of it. How many, *here*, have
 Mortal Diseases calling on them to be
 gone from hence ? And the *rest*, that
 think they may not have one Foot in
 the Grave already, do they not *all* stand
 upon the brink of it ? Every * Day
 should be esteemed as our last day
 And are not all concerned therefore to
 bestir themselves with all their might,
 and without any delay ? Doth not the
 Psalmist complain, *How short mans time*
is, 89, 47 ? And elsewhere, *fix his*
days, but of an hand-breadth, 39. 5 ?

† *Certum est quia morieris: & incertum quando,*
quomodo, vel ubi. Quoniam mors ubique te expectat;
tu quoque, si sapiens fueris, ubique eam expectabis. Bernh.
Med. c. 3. † Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum.
*Hor. Ep. 4. l. 1. * Sic ordinandus est, dies omnis,*
tanquam cogat agmen, et consummet atq; expleat vitam.
Sen. Ep. 12.

Chap. 9. And *Job* pronounce their speed more swift, than of a *Weavers* shuttle, 7. 6? How quickly then must they be swallowed up of *Night*? Were any of you on a journey, and had far to go, and 'twere a dangerous Road, and the Sun were almost going down; would ye then loyter; would you not mend your pace, ride hard, and speed you what you could, to escape the jopardy, and get you safe to your Journeys end? *So run*, saith the Apostle: stand not still: Go not the *Snayle's* pace: Let there be no lingring and lazing: But use your utmost speed: *So run, that you may obtain*, 1 Cor. 9. 24.

3. How weak our strength is.

3. How weak your strength is, to go through with your business. So much to do: so little time: and yet alas, so little strength for the dispatching it; what greatest reason to be instantly up and doing! A *man*, 'tis true, may perform that in an hour, which will cost a *Child* a whole days hard labour; ife're he can compass it. We are all, at best, but weak as Children. Our case is now like *Sampsons*, when his Hair was cut; our * strength is gone.

* *Quid est homo sine gratiâ, nisi quod fuit Petrus cum negaret Christum?* Aug. Sermon. 124.

Laodicea is the lively Picture of *Cor-* Chap. 9.
rupted Nature. She saith, she is *rich*,
and increased in Goods, and needeth no-
thing: when the mean time, altho' she
 know it not, she is *wretched, poor, mi-*
serable, blind, and naked. And may
those men be careless, sit still, laze and
 loyter; whose Circumstances are so
 sad? Why then, their work will never
 be done: and they must be for ever
 undone! There is none other hope.
 Our help cometh all from * Heaven:
 shall we not ply us thither, with all
 our might? God bids us *Ask*, and
seek, and *Knock*: then we are like to
 speed, indeed. But if men will not
 stir, either *foot*, or *hand*, or *lip*: help-
 less, and hopeless must their condition
 be! There is no remedy. It is the di-
 ligent hand, saith *Solomon*, that mak-
 eth rich; hath Gods Blessing, *that is*,
 upon *temporal affairs*. And the Indu-
 strious Seeker is the only Person, that
 we can assure, shall speed with God in
Spiritual concerns. 'Tis certain, that
 he *giveth both to will, and to do, of his*
good pleasure: but we must notwith-
 standing *work out our own Salvation with*

* *Bonus vir, sine Deo, Nemo est.* Sen. Ep. 41. l. 5.

Chap. 9. *fear and trembling, Phil. 2. 12, 13.* And that we are sure, can never be done with *lazing*, and with *loytering*. Remember therefore that our strength being gone; we must go to God for the recovery of it. And he hath promised That *they that wait upon the Lord*, (not, they that will be slaves unto the Devil, in serving still their Sins) *shall renew their strength, Is. 40. 31.*

4. How many and great Impediments in our way.

4. Once more; How many and great Impediments, and Lets, lye in your way. Little, God doth know, this World affords to *help*: but much to *hinder* you, every where? For, besides the natural averſation, backwardness, inconstancy, and irresolution in Men towards * Goodness, which the fond, and false presumption, of a safe, or tolerable estate, at least, in their present Circumstances, doth strengthen *within them*, (as if he that made them would not be so cruel as to damn them; when 'tis but *Justice*, ; and their Incurribleness doth necessitate him to severity): there is likewise, *without them*, an ensnaring World, and a crafty,

Nos multa alligant, multa debilitant; diu in vitiis jacuimus, elui difficile est. Non enim inquinati sumus, sed infecti. Id. Ep. 60. lib. 8

power-

powerful, and spiteful Devil, that are ever hindring of them. How difficult, next to impossibility, do Gods faithful Ministers find it to convince Men of the danger of a *sinful state*, and the necessity of *Regeneration*? They will make no doubt of Mercy, tho' they be never so deep in Sin and Ignorance; when God hath said expressly, to their terror; *They are a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will shew them no favour, Is. 27. 11.* But that conceit of theirs abiding, how like to *Doors of Brass*, and *Bars of Iron* is it, to secure them in their miserable Prison? As for the * *World*, our Saviour tells us, *The cares thereof, and deceitfulness of Riches, and the lusts of other things, choak the word, and it becomes unfruitful, Mark 4. 19.* For the *other things*; what can they be, but *Honours*, *Pleasures*, and the rest of the vain Contentments, hunted after here? All which, like so many heavy weights, and strongest Chains, will not suffer the Captive sin-

* *Plena sunt omnia periculis, plena laqueis; incitant cupiditates, insidiantur illecebræ, blandiuntur lucra, damna deterrent.* Aug. Serm. de temp. 63.

Chap. 9. ner to stir one foot for his own deliverance and Salvation. Therefore in the Parable, *Luke 14*. Either the *Oxen*, or a *Farm*, or *Wife*; some sorry thing, or other shall be pretended for excusing mens neglect of the greatest kindness offered to their Souls. As for *Satan*: he maketh every *Mole-hill* in the Sinners way a very *Mountain*; and puts Religion into the most frightful dress he can, to scare the Sinner from it, He would perswade him, that if he leave his wickedness, and lead an Holy Life in earnest; *farewell* then for ever all merry days; not one good hour is to be expected more: nothing but a Mopish Melancholy Life remaineth for him. Besides, His Friends, and dearest old Acquaintance will abandon him: nay, perhaps, his next Relations will reject and cast him off. To be sure, 'twill be suggested to him, that he shall loose his sweet Contentments *now*, and shall fare no better then his Neighbours do *at last*; if he be not condemned for an *Hypocrite*. These are the Methods in familiar use with the *Enemy of our Souls*. Indeed, here is no reality at all, in any of this: all are but falsehoods; and very lyes, made by the Father thereof.

The

The whole is but a *Bugbear*. But Chap. 9:
That will fright a Child who knows no
 better. And so poor Sinners are driven
 thus from Christ. Which made
 not only the *Servants of our Lord*, but
 even *himself* too, labour for preventing
 this abuse from Satan. *Pro. 3. 16.*
Her waies are waies of pleasantness, and
all her paths are peace. 1 John 5. 3. *None*
of Christs Commandments are grievous.
Matt. 11. 30. My yoke is easie, and my
burden light, saith our Saviour.

But till these difficulties be overcome
 and master'd by the sinner, what hopes
 are there of his being happy? How
 then is he concerned instantly to be-
 stir himself about his business? Can
 he put off, delay, and linger, with any
 safety, any longer? Having so *much*
work, so *little time*; such *weak strength*,
 and so *many lets and hinderances* in his
 way? This is the second Considera-
 tion.

3. Sinners should presently turn: 3. Consi-
 because Delay of turning *now*, doth deration.
 more and more indispose to turn here-
 after; and indeed, at all. That known
 Observation holds most true in this

Chap. 9. Case. * *He that is not fit to day, will be more unfit to morrow.* And that upon this double Account, 1. From the Nature of the Thing, 2. The Righteous Judgment of God.

1. From
Nature of
the thing

1. From the Nature of the thing. *Customs*, as our Proverb truly saith, *is a second Nature.* And all men see, that whatsoever Practice hath been long familiar to a Man, he knows not how to quit the same: 'Twere very easie to give many Instances in matters of a *Civil Nature*. But that would be too far remote from our concernment. Touching *Religious and Moral matters*: if I should observe the difficulty (if not impossibility) of reclaiming people from *inveterate Superstition*; and pick up all Examples to that purpose in Holy Scriptures, and Church stories, (besides the personal knowledge of any of us) 'twould be an endless work. Let it suffice us to take notice, that *open immoralities*; that have none other Plea in the World on their behalf, but *only mens long Conversation* in such evil courses; do notwithstanding stick as close unto them, and are as insepa-

* *Sed propeate nec venturas differ in horas: Qui non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit. Ovid,*

rable from them, as their Flesh is from their Bones, and their skin from it. Nay, which is more to be wondred at, those * very Practises, which, at first sight, have made the sinner startle at them, they were of such a fowl complexion; have afterwards, upon frequent friendly visits, and long and intimate familiarity with them, made him a perfect Votary unto them. Who can forget *Hazael* (2 Kin. 8.) that asked the Prophet whether *He were a Dog*, to do such *Blondy things*, as he had presaged of him? But it proved as natural to him at the last, as for the *fish to live in water*. A soft and tender hand, that, at first taking pains, will Blister, Gall, and sometimes have fresh blood to follow it; upon use a while, and having been accustomed unto labour, contracts a brawny hardness, and feels no further trouble. Alas! 'Tis thus with the Heart and Conscience of a

* *Quantis, quod prae amaritudine prius exhorrebant, usu ipso male consuetudinis in dulce conversum est! Primum tibi importabile videbitur aliquid: processu temporis, si assuescas, judicabis non adeo grave; Paulo post, & leve senties: etiam delectabit: ita paulatim in cordis duritiam itur.* Inter flor. Bernh. c. 49.

Chap. 9. Sinner ! A * long Course in Sin takes away the very sense of sinning ; and so all thoughts of any mischief by it. Nay, he is rooted further in it : and where's the hope of his ever leaving it ? Your young, and tender Plants will bend, even to the ground, with any lesser blast of Wind ; or may withease be drawn up by the roots with the hand of a little Child : which very Plant, when years of standing there have made the Body strong, and the Roots more deep and spreading, defies the fiercest storm, and scorns the Gardeners strength. Even so a sinner, is more strengthened, and far deeper rooted, by * continuance in Iniquity : that it becomes a Work, if not impossible utterly, yet abundantly the more difficult to remove them. That Passage is as Sad, as True, Jer. 13. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin ? or the Leopard his Spots ?* These are Natural Accidents unto them : and there they will

* *Ad mores natura recurrit Damnatos fixa, & mutari nescia. Nam quis Peccandi finem posuit sibi ? quando recepit Ejectum semel attrita de fronte pudorem ? Juven. Sat. 13. * Consuetudinis magna vis est. Pernoctant venatores in nive ; in montibus uri se patiuntur : inde, pugiles cestu contusi, ne ingemiscunt quidem. Cic. Tusc. Qu. 1. 2.*

be still ; when all Mens Arts have been Chap. 9.
befooled about them. It follows, with
great terror : *Then may ye also do good,
that are accustomed to do evil.* A fright-
ful speech to *seared sinners* ! There is
but this Relief alone : *With God all
things are possible.* But at the very
least ; still we must say ; *The Cure is
most improbable* ! This made the Apo-
stle so urgent for present Repentance,
and all endeavours after it ; Even
whilst 'tis called to day, Heb. 3. 13. And
why *this day*, before *to morrow*, Blef-
sed Apostle ? May not Men ; and
young Ones, specially ; who have time
enough before them, venture a little
longer in their sinful waies ? No, by no
means, is his answer : *Lest any of you
be hardened through the deceitfulness of
sin.* Sin is an *Errant Cheat*. And give
it but an Inch, it will take an Ell. And
let it but be quiet now ; 'twill never
by its good will stir hereafter. And,
which is the misery, in continuance it
will bewitch and charm you so, that
you will not only be content to let it
alone, but resolve against the parting
with it. Thus are you hardned by it ;
if you seek not to be presently rid of
it. And as Diseases, of easier Cure at
first,

Chap. 9. first, being let alone, become incurable, and cost the Patients life at last : So will sin prove with them that dally, trifle, and delay about it.

2. From
the Righteous
Judgment
of God.

2. From the righteous Judgment of God: God is provoked to *withdraw all help of Grace* from a delaying Sinner ; and to *give him up to a Reprobate Mind*. And then (Poor Soul!) his Case is altogether desperate. 'Tis utterly impossible, that he should ever return to God. Doth not that God, *who cannot lye*, threaten to serve such careless, and adventurous sinners so, *Prov. i. 28, 29, 30 ? They shall call upon me ; but I will not answer : they shall seek me early ; but they shall not find me*. And why ? *For that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel : they despised all my reproof*. Is not this your case most plainly, *who delay the turning from your sin to God ?* And, because he called, and you refused ; he stretched out his hand and was not regarded (*ver. 24.*) mark with trembling ; how he is resolved to deal with you. And is it not as if he had said ; Let your *Afflictions* lye heavy on you, till they crush your very bones to shivers : yea, let *Temptations*,
like

like a Tempestuous Sea break in upon you, and overwhelm you : yea, let *Corruptions* too, as a Mortal Leprosie overspread you, so as not to leave one sound part about you : and then let *Satan* have the sole Conduct both of them and you, expect no pity, or regard from me. You would delay, upon my many calls, to return to me : and I will now forbear, upon your urgent cryes, all succour unto you. This Method of severity God is provoked to ; and this his Justice, here you see, is resolved upon. Why should he not say of you, as he sometimes spake of your Brethren in Iniquity, the Incorrigible *Jews*, Isa. 1. 5. *Why should you be stricken any more ?* That is, Unto what purpose should I take further Pains, make use of any more meanes about you, for your help : since all, already, is so lost upon you ? And then, *indeed* ; * you are in an Helpless State ! Since he alone gives Both to *Will and Do*, of his good *Pleasure*. And it cannot but be confessed Hopeless too ; when 'tis considered, that this Behaviour of the Sinner

* *Nulla poena ; quanta sit poena !* Aug.de Verb.Dom.
Serm. 37.

Chap. 9. further * urgeth the Almighty to give him up to a *Reprobate Mind*. And certainly this is the sorest Judgement on this side Hell it self. I mean ; for *men to be Mad in Sin without any sense of danger*. And this, in spite of Counsel and Perswasions from Good Friends; Arguments and Importunities from faithful Ministers ; nay Promises and Threats, Mercies and Judgements too, from God himself! And yet too many of these *desperate Bedlams* are among us ; that rave and rage in wickedness, and the very vilest ; so far the while from all remorse, and fear ; that they glory therein, and triumph, as if they were the *only happy men on Earth*! Thus crying peace and safety ; till sudden destruction come upon them unaware, as travel on a Woman with child, which cannot be avoided ! Now, putting of Repentance, and proceeding further in iniquity, under the means of Grace and loud Calls of God unto a Contrary Course, hath brought down from Heaven, this Hell upon the Souls of Men on Earth. Did not God say of such

* *Quod vocationi Pharaonis obtemperare noluit, meruit penam ut induraretur illi Cor, & tantam mentis cecitatem pateretur, &c. Aug. Qu. 68.*

a wicked Ephraim, *He is joyned to Idols*, Chap. 9.
let him alone, Hof. 4. 17? Let him take
 his Course : have his full swinge at
 sin : and see the issue of it ! God will
 unbit him ; take away the Bar ; and
 set the door * wide open to him.
 But if a Blind, and Mad Horse too,
 shall be let loose ; what fearful work
 will he quickly make ? If Walls, or Ri-
 vers, or Precipices be in his way ; if
 Guns, and Swords, and Fire be before
 him : all's one to him. The lively Pi-
 cture of that sinner, on whom this
 Judgement seizeth. Psal. 81. 11, 12.
My People would not hearken to my voice,
saith God : and Israel would none of me.
 'Tis so with You, and All, that still de-
 lay to turn from sin, notwithstanding
 the Divine Importunity with you. So,
 it follows, *I gave them up to their own*
hearts lusts; and they walked in their own
Counsels. Is not this to draw the sluice
 and take away the Dam : to hold no
 longer a restraining hand upon those
 Villanies in their bosomes ? And, so
 far forth, to give Commission to those

* *Quoniam non probaverunt Deum habere in notitiâ,*
dedit illos Deus in reprobum sensum. Quod eos dedit in
reprobum, hoc est, quod induravit cor Pharaonis. Id.
ubi sup.

Chap. 9. Imps of Hell, their Inbred Corruptions, to play *Rex*, as they say; to hurry, and worry them at their own discretion? *Oh dreadful Condition!* How surely, and how suddenly, must those Wretches, under such Conduct, after their short mad sporting on the Brink, tumble to the Bottom of the *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*? And how is it possible to save them thence? They do not see; and will not hear of any danger: and are *deaf Adders*, with whom the loudest Charms are ineffectual! which dreadful Judgment the *Delay of turning* hath brought on Many Sinners!

Wherefore, Sirs, to be longer negligent in this presently necessary Duty; is to make your selves the more incapable of ever discharging it: failing wherein, you are lost eternally! Thus much of the third *Consideration*.

CHAP.

C H A P. X.

4. Consideration : Neglect and delay brings horrible present mischief.
 5. Conf. Doth nothing else but treasure up wrath. 6. Conf. If not now done, likely to be never done. 1. Life uncertain. 2. Gospel may be gone. 3. Or Heart hardened.

4. **P**resent Turning is of so great Importance; because the neglect thereof, brings Present horrible mischief to thee; and loss upon thee. He that will not forthwith come out of Jail; now, when the Prison doors are open to him, must lose the great comfort of his present Liberty, and do himself the damage of staying longer in his servile durance. And he that will refuse to have his Bone, that is out of joint, now set, whilst the Surgeon standeth by to do that service for him; must endure his Lameness, and his anguish longer, and forgoe the present ease that

4. Consideration.

Chap. 10. that otherwise might have been restored to him. So he that will not accept relief of Food and Raiment that is offered to him, but out of scorn, or a fullen humour; or any other reason, will refuse it; he must endure the smart of Cold and Hunger, as he well deserveth. *Thus the Case standeth with the delaying, and impenitent Sinner.* He will not instantly forsake his sins; and so must necessarily lose the Infinite Blessings that presently do attend a Godly Life. For as sin is *a most Accursed Thing*, and brings the worst of Plagues therewith to every one that entertaineth it; so Holiness is the *Greatest Blessing*; and maketh an happy Man of him (whatever else his condition be) that hath the same, as we have heard before. *Blessed is the Man that walketh not in the Counsel of the Ungodly, nor standeth not in the way of Sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful: But his delight is in the law of the Lord — Whatsoever he doth shall prosper —, The Ungodly are not so —,* Pl. 1. 1. &c. So Psal. 119. 1. 2. and 128. 1. and Mat. 5. 8. It would be tedious to recite all places, wherein Gods blessings are pronounced upon
 Godly

Godly Men. Art thou aware, how Chap. 10.
 great a Mischief thou dost thy self,
 by thy refusal presently to forsake thy
 sin: and what a woful loser thou art
 made thereby? 'Tis evident, thou
 forgoest the * greatest Mercies Mortals
 are capable of. He that believeth, *God-*
liness hath the promise of the life that now
is, and that which is to come, whereof
 the Word of God assureth us, 1 Tim.
 4. 8. can make no doubt thereof. And
 being assured of it, who but would
 with him, that found the *treasure hid*
in the Field, instantly sell all to buy
 that Field? And with the Merchant
 that had found the *Pearl of Price,* not
 part forthwith with all he had to make
 a purchase of it? What? To be pro-
 vided for; both for this present World,
 and the Word to come too! What
 more is to be desired? And nothing
 less *True Piety* stores us with! Foolish
 sinner! What a *prize is in thy hands?*
 And for thee *to want an heart to use it;*
 what dost thou make thy self? Why,
 Man, to neglect *Repentance now,* is to
 reject More than *Barns stor'd with*
Corn, Shops fill'd with Wares, chests

* *Tantus est pietatis fructus, tanta justitiæ merces, ut ne
 ab ipsis quidem non desiderari que at impiis, & injustis,*
 Bernh. In Ps. qui hab. Serm. 7.

Chap. 10. cramb'd with Gold and Silver! 'Tis to refuse, what is infinitely better than *Scepters, Thrones, and Crowns* of purest Gold, and adorned with most precious Jewels! *Gods Pardon* of thee, and *Peace* with thee, the Relation of a *Father* to thee, and the *tender Care* of such an One over thee all thy dayes on Earth; besides the *Bliss of Heaven*, Glorious beyond *expression*, and above *conception*, are the Blessings, which thou bar'st thy self all Interest in, and Right unto, by thy delay to turn from sin. And can the *spight of Earth*, and *rage of Hell*, although confederate, do equal dammage and mischief to thee, with what thou wilfully, and most senselessly, dost bring upon thy self, by thy refusal *now* to return to God! Which is the fourth Consideration.

5. Consideration.

5. Nay, by *Delaying thy Return*, Thou dost nothing else the while, but *treasure wrath up for thy self, against the day of wrath*, * Rom. 2. 4, 5. Ah sinner! Dost thou consider, what thou art a doing? The least measure of the the *Wrath of God*, is more than Thou,

* Μακροθυμῆς, &c. Expectat patienter, ut te ad resipiscentiam trahat. Sin autem peccare persistas secundum duritiam tuam, & cor impenitens, thesaurizas tibi iram. S. Chrys. Hom. 3. in 2 ad Tim.

or I, or Any, or All Created Beings Chap. 10.
 are able to stand up under. And hast
 thou then indeed so little kindness for
thy self; and so much spight unto thy
 precious *Soul*; nay so great fondness
 for *Eternal Woe and Misery*: as not
 only to court the same, whilst thou art
 lingering to leave thy sin; but by that
 very practice to make a *Magazine,*
Storehouse, or a *Treasury,* to lay up
 thereof, *Heaps upon Heaps,* for thy self
 for ever? This is the Course, which
 thou art certainly taking, whilst thou
 art loytering, and not repenting.
 'Twas a sad Prophecy of our Saviour,
That a mans Enemies should be those of
his own house. What shall we say of
 Thee, who art so to thy self? Is not
Eternal Death sins Wages? And dost
 not thou the more increase thy sin, by
 thy not turning from it, but continu-
 ance in it; and must not that, upon
 necessity, the more increase thy punish-
 ment? 'Tis plain, that thou art piling
 up more fuel for those Flames, where-
 in thou shalt lye everlastingly consum-
 ing. Answer these serious questions
 unto thy self, O thou delaying sinner.
 Hast not already sins enough to give
 account of unto God? Will not thy

Chap. 10. turn be served by a Common Hell? Must thou needs make thy self a two-fold Child of wrath more than thou wast before? And art resolved to force, the Fiery Furnace to be heated, one seven times more, than it would else have been? This is the wretched Method that men take, who will not *presently turn from sin*; but still make further progress in the same! Shall I beseech them to remember; That *One Trespass* turn'd our first Parents out of Paradise! And the *Rebel Angels* are reserved in Chains of Darknes, on the like score! *They have themselves already thousands* of Transgressions on Gods Book against them: and must they add their *ten thousands* more, by a continuance still in sin? This is the very trade and business wherein they are engaged; whilst they *put off repentance and conversion* unto God. Who is there amongst us all, but will confess, It is his Duty, to serve his sins, *no longer*; but devote himself to Jesus Christ, *immediately*? Therefore, not to do accordingly, must bring that doom on him, pronounced *Luk. 12. 47.* *That Servant that knew his Lords will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his Will,*

Will shall be beaten with many stripes. Chap. 10.

And (alas) the fewest there, will be sadly found too many ! Notwithstanding which, *Delaying sinners* are labouring still for more ! But let them know, tho' they thus dare delay to turn from sin ; God will not do so in his bringing them unto a reckoning. Yea, the more they loyter at *Repentance*, the more he is like to * hasten unto *vengeance*. Especially, since his forbearance of their Punishment, is abused to encourage their forbearance of amendment, *Eccl. 8. 11.* And, *if the Evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming ;* and thereupon, grow bolder in his wickedness, instead of leaving it : the *Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware ; and Cut him in sunder,* * *Mat. 24. 48.* A sore, and sudden surprisal ! Which if thou who still continuest in thy sin, with delay of turning from it, shouldst have

* *Quod insanabile est, statim praecidit, vitaeque privat : quia omnino & aliis nocent, & sibi multo maxime, qui semper in vitiis vivunt.* Plut. de his qui Ser. a Num. pun. * *Agenda est penitentia non solum sollicitè, sed etiam maturè : ne forte Evangelicus ille Pater familias veniat, & quaerens fructum, si non invenierit dicat Cultori, succide illam : ut quid terram occupat ?* S. Ambr. de Pæn. l. 2. c. 1.

Chap. 10. any hope to scape ; at least let *this* af-
 frighten thee ; That, tho' thou loyter,
Judgment doth not linger, nor doth
Damnation slumber, 2 Pet. 2. 3. 'Tis
 set out after thee, and will o'retake
 thee, before thou dost expect it, and
 wilt be willing of it. Though the mean
 time thy *trifling*, and *delaying*, only pre-
 pares thee for an heavier sentence : be-
 cause *hereby* as thy Guilt grows greater,
 thy Hell hereafter will prove hotter
 likewise. Thus thy Delay, doth trea-
 sure wrath up to thee. Which is the
Fifth Consideration.

6. Confideration. 6. And in the last place, 'Tis of the
 highest Consequence to turn from sin
 immediately, for that it may be
 justly feared else, *Whether ever 'twill*
be done at all, or no. And on suppo-
 sal it should never be done, *Sinners are*
undone Eternally ! Give me leave to
 speak both words of *truth* and *soberness*
 to you. It had been better for you,
 that you had never been born, and
 that the Womb had been your Grave :
 or, when you first did see the light,
 that a Millstone, had been hung about
 your necks, and you had been there-
 with

with cast into the bottom of the Sea : or at the least, that you had given up the Ghost, whilst you were hanging on your Mothers breasts ; than that you should have been brought forth into this world, live here, unto old Age, tho never so happily, and hence depart in your iniquities, without Repentance, and Reformation. Such is the horrible danger of an Unconverted sinners State ; so frightful and astonishing are his present Circumstances ; that we may justly say with fear and terror to him ; *Now, sinner, turn, or never.* And that upon this threefold Account at least : *His life is most uncertain ; the Gospel may be gone away ; or his Heart be hardened from the fear of God.*

I. Such is the *Uncertainty of thy life*, 1. Uncertainty of Life. that for ought we, or thou canst tell, thy self, O sinner, the Thread thereof may be snapt asunder this day before to morrow. How often do we see, or hear of, those that go well and hail to Bed, and are dead before next morning ? Of some, that fall down suddenly as they are *sitting* in their house, or *walking* in the street, or *busie* at their work, or *jocund* at their sports ? It may be thou maist be resolved *Hereafter* to

Chap. 10. become Another Man, to turn over a New Leaf e're it be long : yes verily, 'tis thy purpose and intent to do, and be so ! But whilst thou lingrest, and before that time is come, (poor Creature !) perhaps thou wilt be in thy * Grave : and so those thoughts do perish with thy self. The Grave knows no repentance. *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whereto thou goest*, saith the Preacher. And we may add, whereto thou runnest ; whereto thou ridest post. Touching great purposes and promises for hereafter, see what fond things they are, when they do barely respect secular affairs, by the Apostle James 4. 14. *Ye know not what shall be on the morrow : for what is your life ? It is even a vapor ; that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* A vapor, (or the smoak, as we may read it) may rise high, spread large, and look big upon you : but in a trice 'tis lost and gone. David compares our life, to a *declining shadow*, Ps. 102. 11. Towards Sun-set, the shadow is very large and long : but by and by, 'tis none at all : And Job

* *Missa senum, ac juvenum densantur funera : nullum seva caput Proserpina fugit.* Hor. Carm. 1. od. 28.

saith,

saith our dayes are like the dayes of an *Chap. 10.*
hireling. chap. 7. 1. The agreement
 happily may be for a year. But twenty
 occasions hapen, that may turn your
 Servants off, before one quarter, or a
 month, or perhaps a week be over.
 And thus God deales by Men. 'Tis
 not the *Old, Decrepit, and Hospital-*
person only, that hath the Chambers of
 the Grave prepared for him : but of-
 tentimes the * *healthful Youth, and*
hopeful Babe, take up their lodgings
 there, before the other. This falleth
 under daily observation. What a fool-
 ish thing is it then of *them*, that make
 great resolutions, of what they will
 perform hereafter? And can it be bet-
 ter than a Mad adventure, to put of
 present turning from your sins, upon
 pretence that you are resolved to do it
 another time, altho' it were to mor-
 row? Since, as the *Wiseman* saith,
Thou knowest not what a day may bring
forth, Prov. 27. 1. At morning thou maist
 wake, and rise, in life, and health: but e're
 the Evening, sleep the sleep of death.
Thou fool, this night thy soul may be requi-

* *Quis est tam stultus, quamvis sit adolescens, cui
 sit exploratum, se ad vesperam esse victurum? Cic. de*
Senect.

Chap. 10. *red*; or this day; or very hour: and where art thou for ever!

2. Gospel
may be
gone.

2. Or shouldst thou scape this jeopardy; yet there's another near thee: *The Gospel may be taken from thee.* And how are then thy hopes confounded; when all thy help is quite removed! If the well be deep, and we have nothing to draw up the water with: how can we choose but thirst, and faint, and dye? In a path one never walked in, and to an unknown place, when midnight, dark as pitch, is upon a Man, how can he possibly find his way? And if there shall be left none other Medicine in the World but *One*, to save a dying Man, and that be also spent and gone: who can prevent his giving up the Ghost? 'Tis with the sinner at this very pass; in case the Gospel shall be taken from him. *Here only are the Waters, to quench the spiritual thirst. That's the sole * Lamp, unto our feet, and light unto our pathes. And no where else is any Balm of Gilead to save a dying Soul. Consider therefore with your selves a little, I Pray*

* *Lucerna pedibus meis, & lumen semitis, est verbum, quod Scripturis Sanctis omnibus continetur. Aug. in Psal. 118. Conc. 23.*

you;

you ; is the Gospel your Inheritance ? Doth the Fee-simple of it lye in you ? Or have you a long, long Term therein, by any Lease from God ? Nay ; are you not meer Tenants at Will ; and hold upon your good behaviour only ? Remember what was threatned to the wicked Jewes, Mat. 21. 43. *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a Nation, that will bring forth the fruits thereof.* Alas ! For the Land of our Nativity ! *Poor England !* How long hast thou enjoyed *Gods Kingdom* : and yet how little fruit is found thereof in thee ! I will not here complain of the Thorns and Briars, and noysom Weeds of all impieties that overspread thee. Is it not justly to be feared, lest *Gods Kingdom* should forsake thee ? And seek some other People, that will improve it better ? Blessed be the Name of God, he hath not taken our forfeiture yet ! But whether he be not ready to do so, we cannot say : most sure we are, we have so provoked him, there is just cause to dread it. And * what would then be the sin-

* *Fames & defectus verbi, fame & defectu cibi, tanto damnosior; quanto est anima corpore preciosior & prestantior. Justum sanè judicium Dei, ut qui verbum Domini contempserant, ejus inopiâ & penuriâ summâ laborent.* Merc. in Amos. 8 11.

Chap. 10. ners Case, That, *now* delayes to yield obedience to it, and making wise improvement of it? Thou wilt not *now*; and *then* thou canst not, have a Guide to Eternal Happiness. *Now*, no means of Grace will prevail upon thy heart, to turn from sin: *then* all the Means of Spiritual Good will be taken from thee. *Now*, you love darkness, altho the light be shining on you: *then* will the light be gone, and you are left unto that darkness, which leadeth unto utter darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is the Cause of that kind Counsel of our Dearest Lord, Joh. 12. 35. 36. *Yet a little while, and the light is with you: walk whilst ye have the light, lest darkness came upon you: for he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth. And while ye have the light, believe in the light, that you may be children of the light.*

3. Heart
may be
hardned.

3. And lastly, Should the Gospel longer stay (as hitherto, how great soever our danger be, the Lord hath holpen us, be his praise exalted therefore) yet a third Calamity may light upon the sinner justly: and wo be to him; if he doth not hasten his repentance, but delay it still, tis falling down, if

if not already on him : I mean the *Hard-
ning of his heart from the fear of God.* Chap. 10.
What then ; though thou *still live*, and
the *Gospel still be with thee* ; yet if thy
heart be gone, or judicially hardened,
which is all One ; how little is the mat-
ter mended with thee ? Suppose thy
present Thoughts be never so warm
upon thee, of what thou meanest to
do hereafter, in the renouncing of thy
wickedness : if God shall be provoked,
by this neglect to do it *Now*, and by
thy *present Continuance* in thy wicked-
ness, (as he is most certainly) to give
thee up to a Reprobate Mind ; and
shall accordingly inflict that *heavy*
Judgement on thee : what can thy in-
joyment of the *Gospel*, and thy *Life*,
do good unto thee for thy Conversi-
on ? I have said already somewhat of Supr. ch.
this horrible Jeopardy, under which 9. near the
Delaying Sinners throw themselves : End.
and therefore less is needful here. Is
it not Gods threat, That his Spirit shall
not alwaies strive with Man, Gen. 6. 3 ?
May we not suppose God meaning, I
have often called sinners, and long wait-
ed for their return unto me ; I have con-
vinced them in their Consciences, 'tis
their duty to be complying presently, and
they

Chap. 10. *they could not resist the Convictions that I sent them : yet nothing will prevail upon them, they still defer it, do as they did, and are what they were before : I will leave them off, and trouble my self no more about them ; let them take their course, and now be utterly regardless both of me, and their own immortal Souls, until there be no Remedy ? And is not this, the Giving up the Ghost unto the hopes of all such men ! You had before these frightful Instances likewise, in Hos. 4. 17. and Psal. 8. 12. And if God quite leave the sinner, and leave him to the Conduct of the * Powers of Hell, or which comes to one, of his * Corruptions and Lusts within him : they, as they came from the bottomless Pit, will certainly ; what ever little Checks perhaps may (possibly sometime, or other) now, and then, be met with in the way ; will certainly hurry him thither again. Just as the Waters, which come from the sea ; tho they must pass Bridges, go round Hills, and overcome some Dams,*

* Οταν δ, &c. Cum enim a Deo deferimur, Diabolo tradimur. Diabolo autem traditi, extrema patimur mala. Chrys. in John. Hom. 67. * Quid est quod quotidie dicimus, Ne nos inferas in tentationem : Nisi, ut non tradamur concupiscentiis nostris ? Aug. contr. Julian. l. 5. c. 3.

will never leave their course, till they fall, with all the speed they can, into the Ocean. So these Poor Creatures, in spite of *Friends*, and *Ministers*, and *Providence* it self, are restless, till they reach their own Ruine. See the desperate resolution of them, in their lively picture, *Jer. 44. 16, 17.* *As for the word which thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. But will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth : to burn incense to the Queen of heaven, &c.* That is, pursue the greatest and most manifest wickedness ; tho' it be flat *Idolatry* it self. In such a Case the Word of God may be *Precept upon Precept, and Line upon Line*, here a little and there a little : and all will prove ineffectual. Oh ye Delayers of Repentance, think on't with fear and trembling, lest it happen to you, as it did unto the negligent, and incorrigible *Jews*, upon whom that dreadful Threat was executed, *Mat. 13. 15.* *By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand : and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive. For this peoples heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their Eyes have they closed : lest at any time*

Chap. 10. *time they should see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. This Condition is apparently hopeless ! Yet this is the Condition, men do expose themselves unto by their Mad forbearance and delay to turn from Sin !*

And now we see good reason for the saying, *If sinners turn not now, it may be justly feared, They will never do it. There is such Hazard of their Life, the Gospel, or their Heart's being gone ; which makes their Case as desperate altogether.*

And thus we have shewed you (as we could) the Importance both of the Duty it self, *To turn from sin ;* and of the Time of doing it, *Presently and without Delay.* Which was the *first Thing* to be discoursed of, according to the Method at first proposed. The *Second* now ensueth.

CHAP. XI.

Second thing in the Method: The Success of serious thoughts unto Conversion. 1. Arg. Scripture affords several Examples thereof. 2 Arg. God lays the blame of Mens impenitency upon the want of Consideration.

THE *Second Part* of our Discourse ^{2. Part.} was to be taken up in manifesting, ^{The Efficacy of serious thoughts to our Turning.} How *Efficacious, and successful the serious Thoughts of the sinful and miserable Condition wherein an Unconverted sinner is, would prove to his Conversion.* And, notwithstanding the Consideration of what hath been already spoken will go a great way in this very business also, to him that sets himself to a due improvement thereof; yet I shall be more particular, and direct, in the Proof of it, by these four Arguments.

1. Holy Scriptures do afford us many ^{4. Arguments.} *Examples of the success hereof.*

N

2. God

Chap. 12.

2. God layes the blame of *Mens Impenitency* upon the want of this *Consideration*.

3. Such serious Thoughts do naturally remove the Great Impediments of Conversion.

4. Lastly, 'Tis Gods prescribed *Method for Conversion* : and therefore he attends it with his Blessing, when 'tis duly followed.

I. Argument.

1. Serious Thoughts upon Mens sinful and miserable Condition, whilst Unconverted, would prove successful unto turning them from sin to God ; Because we find in holy Scriptures Examples not a few of such success thereof. Now the Argument proceedeth thus. If this Consideration were heretofore successful to this purpose ; except some special reason lay in the Case then which since hath ceased ; we may be well assured 'twill prove so still. But 'twas so successful ; and without a special reason. And therefore so 'twill be now. All that needeth proof here is, the success of this Course formerly to Conversion. And one Example thereof my Text affordeth. For if the *Holy Psalmist* should be asked, How he came to turn his feet unto

unto Gods testimonies ; to make haste Chap. II.
and not delay about it ? His answer will
be : *I thought with seriousness upon my*
waies ; how sinful they were ; and
what misery was thereby my portion.
Then he was prevailed with, to bid
farewell to sin, without more adoe ;
and presently to enter into the waies
of Holiness. So would it prove with
other Sinners, would they but steer the
Course he took.

Yea, thus it holdeth, in the Repen-
tance after Conversion, as well as in that
which is Conversion (the reason being
the same for both) as you shall see in
this Psalmists Case too. For when he
had numbred the people ; wherein he
was deeply sinful, his heart being puff'd
up with pride, departing from the Lord,
and trusting in the Arm of flesh ; the Text
saith, his * heart smote him ; he consi-
dered the Evil he had committed ; and
presently testifieth sincere Repentance,
by a deep Humiliation, Contrition, Con-
fession, and Supplication for Gods par-
don : as you may see, 2 Sam. 24. 10.

But by this means, of Considering his
Evil waies and danger thereupon, Good

* *Conscientia eum reprehendit.* Lyr.

Chap. 11. King *Josiah* was brought unto a serious Repentance, and Reformation; wherein his People followed him also: so effectual is this heavenly Medicine both for *Prince and Subject*. For when the *Book of the Law* was found, and read; and thence was seen how vast the disproportion was betwixt their *course of Life*, and that *Rule of living by*; Himself and People presently made a *Covenant before the Lord*, to keep his *Commandments with all their heart and soul*; and all the people stood to the *Covenant*, 2 Kin. 23. 3. &c. This wrought effectually upon *Ephraim* likewise: for God heareth him thus bemoaning of himself, saith the Text, *Jer. 31. 18.* The meaning is, His thoughts thus practic'd on themselves.* *Thou hast chastized me; and I was chastized*: My Evil waies deserved; and thou, O Lord, inflictedst Chastizement on me: and happy was it for me, that thou servedst me so: for *I was chastized*; I considered my Case, and came unto my self upon it; tho' I had been, and till then was, a *Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*: flinging and throwing at that; but stand-

* In priori membro penam; in posteriori sapientiam, indicat. Calv. in loc.

ing quiet enough at the *Crib* ; for *mer-* Chap. II.
cy, ready ; but averſe from *Duty* ;
 willing to be *ſaved*, but hating to be
Sanctified, The Common fate of Im-
 penitent Sinners ! But ſee the *Cure* !
Turn thou me ! Give both preventing
 and aſſiſting Grace ; and it ſhall never
 be ſo again. He is another Man, from
 what he was !

I ſhall only urge one more ; and
 that a very Emphatical One, of the
Prodigal, Luk. 15. 17. &c. Till he
cometh to himſelf ; recovers from his
ſpiritual Madneſs (under which all the
 Unconverted Lye) and conſiders of
 his forlorn miſerable ſtate, *juſt ſtarved*,
and perishing ; what a profligate hope-
 leſs Wretch he is ! But *theſe Thoughts*
 prevail effectually ; firſt to a ſerious
Reſolution of Repentance, ver. 18, 19.
 then to a ſpeedy *Execution* of the ſame,
 ver. 20. * *He aroſe ; and came* (without
 delay) *to his Father*. And unto hap-
 py purpoſe was it ! As it would like-
 wiſe prove to others, would they but
 tread his ſteps. Do but in ſadneſs be-
 think your ſelves, *O ye Delaying ſinners* ;
 how great the guilt is lying on you ;

* Cogitat, & cogitando ſurgit, pergens ad patrem.
 Aug. Ad frat. in Er. Sermon. 27.

Chap. II. how highly God is angry with you; how speedily death is stealing on you; and how surely Hell is close upon the heels thereof; except you hasten from your sins to Jesus Christ; and, doubtless, you will have no rest nor peace in staying but one moment longer in that State you are in. *Israel* did not hasten more from *Egypt*, nor *Lot* fly faster out of *Sodom*, than you would do from an Unregenerate Condition: and with greater vehemency, than the barren Mother did for Children to her Husband, will you cry to Jesus, Lord, *Grace and Pardon, or we dye!* This is the first Argument.

2. Argument.

2. The *Second Argument* for the success of *serious Thoughts*, &c. is, This; Because God *layes the fault, and chargeth the blame of Mens continuing Wicked and Impenitent wretches still, upon Inconsideration and Unthoughtfulness of their Waies and State.* Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? No doubt to be made of that. Now there would be no right and reason in Gods doing so; supposing that the *Thoughts we speak of* would not prove effectual for the Cure hereof. As for Example:
How

How can that Physitian blame his Patient's Neglect to use the Medicine he prescribed, as *the Cause of his continuing bad, or may be waxing worse*; in Case the Physick he appointed were nothing proper to the disease at all? 'Tis very absurd, and all men know it, to assign that as the Cause of any thing, which is no Cause at all thereof. But men are fallible, All. And the best Artist may easily mistake the Distemper, and misapply his remedy too. But the *most Wise God* is above all error in either Case. Therefore if he complain of Mens *Incogitancy* as the Cause of their *Impenitency*; we may boldly conclude, that *Serious Consideration* would be the Cure thereof. And that God doth so we find, *Isa. 1.* For when, *ver. 4.* and onward, you read a Black Bill exhibited, and an High Impeachment drawn up against *Judah* and *Jerusalem*; the sum whereof is this, *That they were very bad, and desperately resolved so to be*: we have the reason premised to all this Evil, *ver. 3.* * *The Ox knoweth his Owner,*

* Illi autem ne hoc quidem fecerunt, quod bruta faciunt animalia: ut beneficiis vincerentur, & intelligerent pastorem, & nutrimentum suum. Hierom. in *Isa. 1. 3.*

Chap. II. *and the Ass his Masters Crib : but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Hence is all that mischief ! Those Animals spoken of, by very Instinct are aware, who keeps and feedeth them ; and they readily yield their service for it. Neither fierceness in the One of them, nor sluggishness in the Other, is any bar thereto. But Israel knoweth not ; taketh no notice, to whom he is indebted for whatsoever he hath, and is : Gods People doth not consider ; how evilly they requite their Merciful and Bountiful Benefactor, and thereby turn his patience into displeasure, his favor into fury ; and what a woful issue there must be at last ! And therefore 'tis, that they are more brutish than the very Brutes, and persevere in their iniquity. Thus we observe, that the continuance in Ungodliness is clearly reducible to the want of serious thoughts about mens waies and state. So twas with Judah and Jerusalem.*

And if you enquire the reason, why *Ephraim* and *Samaria* were so profligate in their wickedness, as we may see they also were, *Hos. 7. 1.* the second verse *there* gives us alike account, to that we had just now in the others Case.

Case, *They consider not in their hearts,* Chap. II. *that I remember all their wickedness.* As if God should say ; whatever they may, sometime or other, pretend by a *good word*, or so ; in *heart* they do not consider, that all their sinful waies are before mine Eyes ; that my Justice will not suffer wickedness, unrepented of, to go unpunished ; that 'tis a fearful thing to fall into my hands ; that their day of reckoning is shortly coming ; and that there is no resisting, or evading my Tribunal. And because they have not serious thoughts upon these matters ; therefore they proceed as they were wont to do, or rather do wax worse upon it. As clear a Proof, as the former !

I shall produce you but One Prophet more, and that is *Jeremy* ; who maketh full demonstration of this matter. For Chap. 8. 5. Upon that heavy Charge of a *Perpetual Back-sliding, holding fast deceit, and refusing to return* ; which is exhibited against the People there : we have God himself in ver. 6. rendring this reason of it. *I heard cry, and heard, but they spake not aright : no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, what have I done.* These unhappy

Chap. II. sinners were far indeed from true Repentance ! And 'tis no wonder. They never* called themselves unto a reckoning ; never reflected seriously on their waies, and state ; no, not so much as once to put the question to themselves, *what had they done ?* Here was no Consideration, how great their guilt was, what an Evil thing sin is, and what fearful Vengeance doth abide final Impenitence ! Therefore they were mad, and desperate in their impiety, as 'tis excellently described in the end of the verse : *Every One turneth to his Course, as the horse rusheth into the Battel.* An Elegant similitude to represent an Inconsiderate sinner by. When the Armies are ingaged, the War-Horse never thinks, that there are *Swords*, and *Pikes*, and *Muskets*, and *Pistols*, and it may be *Canons* planted just before him : but on he makes, till he falls down dead. Thus do these Sinners ! They never mind the Eternal Wrath of an Almighty God, that

* Non recogitant de peccato suo : nec dicunt Quid feci ? S. Hieron. in loc.

marcheth forth against them in their wicked Courses ; until it light upon them, and they cannot avoid it. Would not the serious thoughts hereof stop their Carier, do we think ; make them to halt, and wheel about, and take some other Course ? No doubt on't, but they would quickly hang out a white Flag ; throw down their Arms ; submit to Mercy, and sue for peace through Jesus Christ. Sound Repentance, Sincere Faith, and Holy Obedience, would be the business henceforth wholly to be attended by them. And this concludes the second Argument.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

3. Argument. *It naturally tends to remove Impediments. 1. Indifferency about Religion. 2. Presumption of safety in Sin. 3. Sloth and Negligence in Duty.*

3. Argument.

THE Third Argument is, such Consideration would be thus successful ; Because *it naturally tendeth to the breaking down those walls of brass, and Bars of Iron, that lye in the sinners way to stop his turning from his sin to God ; and so it frees Conversion of the great Impediments, and Lets thereto.* 'Tis very well known, that if the sluice be drawn, or dams be broken down, the waters will not stay any longer, but forthwith take their Course with freedom. Nay, in most Diseases of our Body, and of them that prove so often mortal unto Men, if the *Physitian* can but once remove *Obstructions*, and clear those *stoppages* that are within the body, the *Patient* will recover. And every

every body seeth, that when a New Chap. 12.
 house is to be reared where an old One
 stood, the Rubbish must be first re-
 moved, and the Ground well cleansed,
 er'e the foundation can be safely laid,
 or any superstructure rais'd. Certain
 'tis, there are great stops, and hin-
 derances to Conversion; mighty
 Mountains lye in a Sinners way, which
 must be made a Plain, er'e he can come
 to God. And those *Thoughts*, and that
Consideration, whereof we treat, are
 surely efficacious, through the Heav-
 enly Influence, for the levelling of them.
 I shall not be so curious as to seek out,
 and take notice of, all Lets of this kind
 that might be found, It shall suffice
 me here to fasten upon *Two* or *Three* of
 the Chief Impediments; and observe,
 how Proper the Consideration spoken
 of is for removing of them. And they
 Are, *Indifferency about Religion*, *Pre-*
sumption of safety in Sin, together with Three
Sloath and Negligence to pursue the Imped-
Means of sound Conversion. ments
 If all, or &c.
 any, whereof remain, and stand im-
 movable, 'tis utterly in vain to expect
 or hope for a Sinners turning from his
 sin. They are not only like the *Py-*
renean Hills, or *Hannibals Alps*, to stop
 his

Chap. 12. his Passage : but rather as the *Great Gulf* fixed betwixt Hell and Paradise, that *Abraham* telleth *Dives* of, which utterly hindred any stirring from the One place to the Other. But of them severally, and in their Order.

1. Indifference about Religion.

I. *Indifferency about Religion.* Not to insist upon the flat *Infidelity*, and downright *Atheism*, whereof the world (alas!) is full ; and *this Age* thereof, and in our *Climate* too especially ; Sinners, tho' their mouth be silent to it, speak it generally by their life and waies ; that *Holiness* and *Sin*, *Heaven* and *Hell*, *God* and the *Devil* are much at one with them. Little, or no difference is there, as their *Behaviour* argues, betwixt those *vast*, and *wide Extreams*. Touching *Holiness* ; they have but very little to say about it ; if they do not rail at it ; and for *wickedness* ; 'twere a Wonder, if any of them should ever open their mouth against it. *Heaven* may be a good place for ought they know ; and they do not much doubt, but *he that dwelleth there* is good natured also : but they can never believe, *Hell fire* is so hot, as some Men render it ; nor the *Devil* so black as he is painted.

painted. At last; it plainly comes to this with them; They are *flat Centers* to *One side*, or the *Other*; and care not that their thoughts should ever be troubled *either way*; I mean, for God or Satan, Heaven or Hell, Holiness or Iniquity. Now this must make it utterly impossible for such Men ever to be converted: that is, whilst they stand thus affected. But *that Consideration*, we are speaking of, must of necessity rowse Men out of this Indifferency, and put them into * a better temper. To have sad, piercing thoughts within us, that God doth certainly threaten all Iniquity with Eternal vengeance; that we our selves are deeply guilty of Numberless Offences; that all our vain thoughts, as well as idle words, and wicked deeds, are down upon his Book; and he will surely, and suddenly call us to a reckoning for them; and as certainly condemn us to a *worm that never dyeth*, and *fire that shal not be quenched*, unless we heartily and timely shall repent thereof: how must *such thoughts as these* instantly, and for ever, discharge Indifferency

* *Ipsam fontem suam, idest, mentem, de qua oritur, purificat consideratio.* Bernh. de Confid. l. 1. c. 7.

Chap. 12. about Religion. Can they be longer Men; that will be longer Neuters in this matter; Must not Mens Reason be renounced, if now Religion shall not be affected? Farewell, no doubt, unto Humanity, if this Indifferency can longer stay! But we have seen before, they set this packing. And then, a very Prodigal, and the most Unconcerned Wretch in Nature, is presently rowled, ariseth, and goeth to his Father, Luk. 15. 20.

2. Presumption of safety in Sin.

2. *Presumption of safety in sin.* This is Another, and a most mischievous Bar. I think, 'twere not amiss to say; if Indifferency slayes its *Thousands*, Presumption doth its *Ten thousands*. What Multitudes of Open Sinners frequent most Congregations, and wear the very Livery of Hell upon them; I mean, are commonly guilty of those vile *Enormities*, that, by the express Word of God, shut Men out of Heaven; who yet as confidently hope to go to Heaven when they dye, as if they never had at all offended? Do they not fancy the Almighty like themselves; or at the least represent him to their minds, just what they would have him be?

be? ¹ And this, notwithstanding God is pleased to rebuke them for such Insolency; with great distaste at their bold folly and madness in so doing? For *Psal. 50. 21.* he saith to the wicked Man, *Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a One as thy self: but I will reprove thee and set thy sins in order before thine Eyes.* Will not Sinners sometimes speak it out, That he who made them, surely will not be so cruel as to damn them? Whilst the Lord is telling them for this, *They are a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour,* as before? Lastly, is it not too frequent for them to bless themselves in their own heart, saying; *I shall have peace, tho' I walk in the imagination of mine heart,* to * *add drunkenness to thirst*; meaning, worser sins to bad before? Tho' God protesteth, *He will not spare such a One; but his Anger and Jealousie shall smite against him,* Deut. 29. 19, 20. These things are all notorious. And yet the guilty persons are nothing doubtful, but that their State is very good, and

* *Meaning, to add sin unto sin, in abundance; as Isa. 30. Ainsw.*

Chap. 12. all is well, and so it will continue. Where are the hopes then of bringing such Men, *so conceited*, unto Repentance and Reformation? May you not as well expect, that One who is in perfect health will be perswaded to be at charges with the Physitian, to put him into a tedious, and costly method of Physick for his Cure? Or, One that hath a large Estate, and enough to spare for many others that are in want, should be prevail'd with, to go a begging from door to door? Remember what our Saviour saith, Mat. 9. 12. *The whole need not the Physician, but they that are sick. He did not come to call the righteous (that thought nothing ailed them:) but sinners (that were sensible of their misery) to repentance.* And how quickly would *The Thoughts we speak of* bring Men to their senses, and make them feel that wou upon them? They would soon dismount this *fond*, and *high-rai's'd Confidence*; and batter down this *foolish Castle*, built but in the Air, or on the Sand. I will shew this plainly; yet by one only Instance. But 'tis a famous and most remarkable One; of the *Blessed Paul* himself. Saith he,
Rom.

Rom. 7. 9. *I was * alive without the law* Chap. 12:
once; but when the Commandement came,
sin reviv'd, and I dyed. That is, I ve-
 rily thought, my Condition very safe
 and good, as my own heart could wish;
 but 'twas, whilst *I was without the law;*
 not seriously thinking upon that, and
 comparing my waies and state there-
 with, and so not pondering with my
 self, how fully the Sentence of it lay a-
 gainst me. But *when the Commande-*
*ment * came;* not to mine Eyes, or
 Eares only; for there it had been
 much, and long before: but to my
 Mind, and *serious thoughts,* so as to ob-
 serve my *waies* and *estate* point-blank
 condemned thereby: Then *Sin reviv-*
ed; shew'd both its Power, and Guilt,
 before not taken notice of: And *I dyed;*
 my bladder was prick'd, my plumes
 pluck'd, and top-sail lowered; my
 hopes gave up the Ghost; and I per-
 ceived, in this condition, I was a dead
 Man, and lost for ever. Then, was
 he glad to fly to Christ for Grace and
 Pardon without delay, and stay no
 longer where he was.

* *Olim ego in Pharisaismo Vivus eram; nempe opini-*
one meâ; ut rectè Augustinus; vivere mihi videbar,
*quasi morti haud obnoxius. Paræ. in loc. * Intelligi,*
Legem dici ipsi advenisse, cum ab eo cepit rectè intelligi.
 Bez: O 2 3. Sloath

Chap. 12.
3. Sloth &
Negli-
gence to
pursue the
Means.

3. Sloth and Negligence to pursue the Means of Sound Conversion. It is a sad, but true observation, that many Persons who seem escaped from the two former dangers, asserting stily the flat necessity of being Religious, and condemning utterly any hopes of safety in a sinful state; do notwithstanding here miscarry: thus far they have brought to the Birth; but yet want strength for bringing forth: because they will not be industrious at the Means of their Delivery. The wise Mans speech is applicable unto them; *There is a prize in the hands of Fooles: but they have no heart to use it.* They will not be up, and doing: Not *ask*, that they may receive: *seek*, that they may find: *knock*, that it may be opened to them. They will not *strive* to enter in at the strait gate: tho' many faint seekers shall not find the way, * *Luk. 13. 24.* They will not set out in earnest, and hold on their way with speed, untill they reach their Journies End. *Negligence and Sloth destroy them.* Poor Souls! They

* *Αγωνίζεσθε; omnibus viribus enitimini. L. Brug. Studendum, ut agamus quæ Deus nobis præcepit: i. e. ut discamas rationes salutis nostræ ex Evangelio; & Evangelio credamus; & sicut Evangelio dignum est vivamus; atque ita in celum contendamus. Pisc. in Obser.*

are well enough content to scape the Chap. 12.
 danger coming on them: but can't take
 hearty pains, to get out of the reach
 thereof. *Solomon* speaketh aptly, and
 to this very Case: *The desire of the*
slothful killeth him: because his hands
refuse to labour, Prov. 21. 25. *Saved;*
 that they would be; you shall hear
 them say, *Rather than gain the World;*
 but *to run the ways of Gods Command-*
ments in order thereunto, to be *ever*
pressing toward the mark; that they will
 not be prevailed with to do: and so
 they do fall short, and must lye down
 in sorrow. For whatsoever clear, and
 powerful Convictions men are under, if
 they come not unto Christ; do not
 diligently hear, and read, and pray;
 keep a strict watch over their thoughts,
 and words, and waies; carefully a-
 void Temptations, conscientiously ab-
 stain from the appearance of Evil, con-
 tinually labouring to be cleansed from
 the filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, that
 that they may perfect holiness in the
 Fear of God; they are not, nor can-
 not be true Converts from their sin:
 and so are out of the ready Road, the
 Kings High-Way, to the Kingdom of
 Heaven. Men may say now, *as they*

Chap. 12. did heretofore, on a not much unlike occasion, *This is an hard saying, who can bear it?* But 'tis most true; That genuine Grace disposeth to it *all*; and affects the heart with Grief, when it failes in *any*. Now, what a mighty Influence will, and must *The Thoughts* under Consideration with us have, to shake of *Sluggishness*, and bring on *Activity*, as with switch and spur? Will they not tell the Sinner, not as she did *Sampson*, *the Philistines are upon thee*; but, the Infernal Crew are about to sieze thee, Man! The wrath of Heaven is falling down upon thee! And the bottomless Pit is gaping to devour thee! Will not this snap the *Cords*, and break the *withs*, wherewith the wretched sinner was held back from diligent duty? How must it oyl his wheels, and be as a Goad in ^{his} side, to make him mend his pace? Who can be able to sit still, and loyter, under the clearest prospect, and warmest thoughts of *Eternal Woe*, as appertaining unto *Lazy Sinners*; and *Eternal Bliss*, to *Active Saints*? The Prodigal, *thus affected* (we heard it 'twice) speeds to his Father, and stayes no longer. The *Jews, then*, have no rest; but cry out to the Apostles,

postles, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do*, Act. 2. 37? So doth the *Jaylor*, with greatest passion; *What must I do to be saved*, Act. 16. 30? And *Blessed Paul* himself, in this Case, wants to be imployed: *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*, Act. 9. 6? So far are all Men, when these Thoughts are warm upon their hearts, from being idle, lazy, sloathful wretches any longer; that they will *long*, and *seek*, and *beg* for work, to help them heaven-ward, that they may *escape the wrath to come*.

And thus, Consideration doth remove the Impediments of Conversion: and so will prove successful unto *The turning* Men from Sin to God. Which is the third Argument.

C H A P. XIII.

4. Argument. 'Tis Gods Method for Conversion. Witness 1 His Word, by Prophets and Apostles :
2 His Works of Providence.
3 General Experience of the Converted.

4. Argument.

4. **T**HE last Argument for the success thereof is this: 'Tis Gods appointed way and Method for Converting Sinners to himself: and therefore he attends it with his blessing, when 'tis duly followed. Conversion is so much acknowledged to be the *Work of God in Men*; that without his Special Grace, preventing and assisting them, they will be never turned from their Sins sincerely. But yet God works on Men, as upon *Reasonable Creatures*: not as a Carver doth upon a Statue, or any others on an Engine; by meer force, or power, without themselves. No: but he proposeth proper Objects to our *Understanding*: which being there

there received, may affect our *hearts* ; Chap. 13.
and suitably influence our lives to
Good : tho' none of this succeedeth
without his *special Grace* concurring,
neither. In order therefore to Con-
version, he first acquaints us with our
selves ; what wretched, hopeless, help-
less Creatures in our sinful state we are.
Blessed be his Name, he doth not leave
us here : for then we were forlorn in-
deed. But *here* 'tis he begins. And
this can never be effected otherwise,
than by the bringing of us to a serious
reflection on our waies and Condition ;
according to the judgment, Scriptures
give of the one and other. For as in
the *Old Creation* of this Great World,
the first Thing made by God was *Light* :
'tis so likewise in the *New Creation* in
this Little World ; I mean in Man.
And as the Light created in the Soul by
God, shewes what our Duty is, unto
us ; so it especially serveth to convince
us of our swervings from the same, in
order to the reducing us thereto again.
This is the Ordinary fixed Method of
God, for converting Sinners to himself :
and 'tis apparent that 'tis so, *both from*
the Word of God (his Instrument in this
great affair) and *his works of Provi-*
dence ;

Chap. 13. dence, which do second that : tho' we should say little, of the *General Experience* in the Case of all that are *Converted*.

I. 'Tis manifest from the *Word of God*. For both the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, in their Sermons of Repentance and Conversion unto People, labour to affect them with their sad Condition in sin ; and in order thereunto, set them on the serious Consideration of their waies. As for the *Prophets*, how industrious is *Haggai* thereat ; when he proposeth, and repeateth this Exhortation, almost both in a breath, as you may see, Chap. 1. 5, 7. *Consider your waies, Consider your waies* : and both thus ushered in, (that they might not take it for a fancy of his own head) *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts* ? And is not this a plain signification, that *Thinking seriously*, how evilly Men do deal with God, and thereupon what wrath is due from him to them again, would prove effectual to turn them from their Sins, and bring forth that Repentance which would prove saving to their Soules ? This is the reason why the Holy *Psalmist*, in the Person of God, bids those Atheistical wretches, who thought God like themselves ; either to approve,
or

or at the least not to observe their Villanies ; To Consider, tho' they forgot God. And what should they exercise their *serious thoughts* upon ? That, *Gods forbearance was none acquittance*: he knew their whole behaviour, and would make them know it too : for they must come unto a reckoning, and 'twould be a terrible One unto them. *I kept silence : but I will reprove thee, and set thy Sins in order before thine eyes.* Consider hereof: *lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you,* Psal. 50. 21, 22. Doth not Ezekiel, when he doubles his Call unto Repentance, *Turn ye, turn ye from your Evil waies* ; labour to make the same effectual with them, by urging them unto the Consideration of their present state, *Why will ye dye ?* Is not this as much as to say ; I beseech you , ponder how dangerous your Case is, what unavoidable ruine you bring upon your selves, if you go on in sin : nothing but *Death* can be your Portion. Wherefore will you be such Enemies to your selves, and murder your own Souls ! Oh, *think hereof in earnest.* I might be tedious in such Instances. But let it suffice to make this further observation, that the Prophet *Jeremy* renders

Chap. 13. renders *these serious thoughts upon our waies*, as a Necessary Premise and Introduction to our turning from our Sin. *Let us * search and try our waies*: and then follows, as the Thread doth to the Needle, *Turn unto the Lord*; as if this latter would never be done without that former, *Lam. 3. 40.* And but one thing more; namely, that nothing less than sincere Repentance is assured upon *serious thoughts* of past miscarriages by *Ezekiel, Chap. 16. 61. and 20. 43.* but specially, *36. 31.* *Then shall ye remember your own evil waies, and your doings that were not good. And what will come of this? You shall loath your selves in your own sight for all your abominations.* And where there is this self-aborrancy, there is *Conversion most infallibly.*

Apostles. The Apostles also tread in their steps. Doth not *he, of the Circumcision*, set sinners thoughts on work upon their sinful waies, that he might bring them to Repentance, when he so closely chargeth them with the most horrid Guilt the Sun e're shone upon, and was ashamed to see it, when they were act-

* *Vias nostras scrutari, est cogitationum interna discutere.* S. Hieron. in loc.

ing it ? Did he not mean to set home Chap. 13.
Those Thoughts, when he drave them
 to the quick ; for *they were pricked at*
their hearts, * Act. 2. 36, 37 ? And see !
 This deep wound, was only unto Per-
 fect Health ! For a Glorious Conver-
 sion followed : *And the same day were*
added about 3000 souls, ver. 41.

And then the *Apostle of the Gentiles*
 was from Heaven directed to take the
 self-same Course. As you may see *Act.*
26. 18. For his business was, first, *To*
open mens Eyes, and to turn them from
darkness to light. The Eyes of their
 Mind that is, by curing them of their
 Natural Blindness and Ignorance : to
 the End, they might *understand, and*
consider what their Condition was, and
 how bad the Case stood betwixt God
 and their Souls. Then follows, *The*
turning of them from the power of Satan
to the living God ; which is but ano-
 ther way of expressing, *The turning of*
them from their Sins to God. So that
 still, the work of *Conversion* obtaineth
 not but on *Conviction* ; and that aris-
 eth from the *Consideration* we are speak-

* *Ἀνέμνησιν αὐτῶν*, &c. He mildly remembers them
 of their peculiar evil deeds ; and that is all. Chrys.
 in loc.

Chap. 13. ing of. Yea, the *Blessed spirit*, who is the Author and the Finisher of the whole, *beginneth*, at discovering unto Men their guilt ; which cannot be without the Exercise of *such serious Thoughts*. For when he was promised by our Saviour ; the first work to be undertaken by him was, To *Reprove* (or * *Convince*, as your margent readeth, and neerer to the Greek) *the World of Sin*, Joh. 16. 8.

'Tis evident therefore from Gods Word, that this is his Method for converting Souls unto himself ; according to the Practice of the *Prophets* and *Apostles* ; suitably to the *Instructions* they received from God ; and to the *Operation* of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of Men.

2. From
Gods
Works.

1. Mer-
cies.

2. 'Tis likewise plainly so ; from his *Works of Providence*, which second the *Word* unto this Purpose. For, if you do Consider *Mercies* ; their Errand is very plain, to tell those persons who are partakers of them, not only that they are Great Debtors to that God, who sent them ; but more particularly

* ΕΛΙΓΞΕΙ Pro Convinco autem frequens est. Steph.
that

that they * owe all holy Obedience to him ; which must infer the parting from their Sins. Nay 'tis the Observation of the Holy and Wise Apostle *Paul*, that the *Goodness of God*, namely, his Works of Patience, and loving kindness towards them, *leads men to repentance* ; which lyeth in forsaking Sin, and living holy lives, *Rom. 2. 4.* And the *Judgments of God* ; they bring the same Message too. That they are Almighty's *Messengers* we read, *Mic. 6. 9.* *Hear ye the Rod ; and who hath appointed it.* If the *Rod* were silent, men should not be called to hearken to it. But it doth speak aloud : and telleth us, that we must consider our waies, and turn us unto God. And did it not thus succeed with *Josephs Brethren*, *Gen. 42. 21* ? For till the *Rod* was on their Back, they never bethought them of their former heinous guilt towards him : but then it came into their minds unto good purpose. For they penitentially, both confess their sin, and acknowledge the Justice of their present punishment for

2. Judgments.

* Ελεῖς δὲ πάντας, &c. *Misereris autem omnium, quia omnia potes ; & dissimulas peccata hominum ; ut resipiscant.* Sapient. 11. 24.

Chap. 13. the same. So *Manasseh*; till his deep *Affliction*, he never thought upon the Evil of his waies. But *then his soul is humbled in him*, and he turns to God in earnest, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12, 13. To dispatch: this made the good *Widow* to remember her past offences, 1 *Kin.* 17. 18. And *holy Job* in his *Elder dayes*, to cast back serious thoughts upon his *youthful sins*, *ch.* 13. 26. And the Prophet *Esay* saith more generally touching all Men, That *when Gods Judgements are in the Earth, the Inhabitants thereof will learn Righteousness*, * Chap. 26. 9.

By all which 'tis evident, that Works of *Mercy* and of *Judgment* serve to bring Men to a Reflection on their waies, in order to Repentance, and Reformation of their lives.

3. General Experience: I shall only make appeal unto the Consciences of all that are Sincerely turned from their Sins to God: *Whether being grown to years of discretion when God was pleased to work upon their Souls, they are not well aware, that he took this very course with them; to set*

* *Locus hic est de utilitate Crucis. Calv. in loc.*

their minds at work, in a serious and sad Chap. 13.
*Consideration of their own bad Condition in the estate of Nature, in order to the bringing forth the * Babe of Grace, or the New Creature, in them ? And whether, they also will not subscribe ex animo to the Holy Psalmist in my Text, I thought upon my waies, and then turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies : I made hast, and delayed not to keep thy Commandements ?*

Thus have we also done with the last *Argument*, for the success of serious thinking on our waies and state, to sound Conversion unto God from sin. The first was, *We have many Examples of success in Scripture ; 2. God lays the blame of mens impenitency on the want of these Thoughts ; 3. They naturally tend to remove the Bars and lets of mens repentance ; And 4. In the last place, 'Tis Gods appointed Method for bringing Sinners to himself ; as hath been proved both by the Word, and Works of God, and the Experience of his People.*

* Hoc penitentiae initium est, hic ad pietatem ingressus ; tristitiam ex peccatis nostris concipere, ac malorum nostrorum sensu vulnerari. Calv. in Act. 2. 37.

C H A P. XIV.

Last thing in Method: Inferences.

1. *Instruction: 6. Lessons:*

1. Total Omission of serious thoughts, worst mischief to selves.

2. Slight Practice of them nothing worth. 3. Next cause of impenitency is their Neglect. 4. And unacquaintance with self shews strangers to God. 5. Few true and real Christians. 6. Best Friends and Preachers that most engage us to serious thoughts.

Third
and last
Part.
Inferen-
ces.

3. **T**HE last part of our Discourse, according to the Method at first proposed, was some *Inferences* from the whole, to make the same of utmost use, and service to us. And they are in the General but these two: By way of, 1. *Instruction*, 2. *Exhortation*.

Instruct.

1. By way of *Instruction*:
we have these 5, or 6 *Particular Lessons*

sons that may be learned hence.

Chap. 14:

I. That the total omission of a serious reflection on mens waies and state towards God, is the greatest mischief they can be guilty of against themselves. The reason is apparent from what hath been before discoursed of: It tends directly to eternal misery, by * barring a sincere Repentance towards God. And yet how many Thousands are there in the World under profession of the Christian Faith; not only amongst the rash, and giddy Youth, but of the Elder, Graver, and more Sober sort of People, who have been planted in Gods Vineyard, and enjoyed the Word and Ordinances for Thirty, Forty, or, it may be Fifty years together, that still are perfect Strangers to this so necessary a work; have never entred into serious thoughts, how the case doth stand betwixt their Souls, and God Almighty! Whether you, that hear this now, are not in the number of those guilty, is worthy of your strict inquiry. For, should it prove

* *Quanto namque in cognitione mei proficio, tanto ad cognitionem Dei accedo.* Bernh. Medic. c. 1.

Chap. 14. so, whatever good opinion other people shall entertain of you, and how fondly soever you may be conceited of your selves; both their opinion, and your own conceit, will fail you at the last: there cannot be a *sound Conversion* where it hath not been usher'd in by *serious Consideration*. And then, what infinite dammage is brought on Men, by this neglect! What horrible folly are such Persons guilty of? Common Prudence will direct them to obviate, what lyeth in them, all mischiefs to their outward Man. They will willingly spare the time, busie their thoughts, and lay out their utmost pains to prevent a loss or evil, that may befall them in their Name, Estate, and especially in their Health and Life: but (the misery is!) they will not abide the trouble, of calling themselves unto a reckoning about their Spiritual Condition, and considering seriously of their waies and state towards God; tho' this might save the loss of their Immortal Souls, and so prevent the greatest of all losses that can happen to them; and which by such neglect is falling on them. Think sadly of our Saviour's words, *What shall it profit a man to gain the*

the whole World, and lose his own Soul, Chap. 14.

Mark 8. 36. The saddest bargain that ever was made!

2. That *slight and perfunctory thoughts*, 2. Lesson.
upon Mens waies and State, will be of little, or no service to their Souls at all.

This Inference is the rather needful to be heeded, because of some that will plead guiltless in the former Case. There are alas, great Numbers, who will not only commend this necessary practice, but pretend unto the performance of it also; if we shall take their word for it. But whatsoever *Thoughts* of that kind, have at any time been entertained by them; they prove so faint, so transient, and such superficial Things, *God knows*, that they never reach the quick at all. They are nothing *serious*, fixed, and affecting to the heart, the while. And what can be expected towards a sincere Conversion *thence*? Shall the effect prove nobler than its cause? Can sound Repentance ever grow upon the stalk of such unfixed, and unrooted Thoughts as those? What if from hence, men shall confess, they have done evil, they are great sinners, and have much to answer for: if in the same breath this seeming

Chap. 14. Wound shall be healed by them, at the cheapest rate imaginable? For nothing more common with them than to acquiesce in this, *That God is Gracious: and they cry him Mercy for the same.* And now, though they return to their former Vomit; proving as bad, it may be worse, than they were before: all is as well with them, as they desire it should be; and they cannot doubt, but that their Case is very safe and good. And what can any Christian think of *such Thoughts* as these? They are but airy Ghosts, or empty Carcases of serious Consideration; which have no Life and Soul at all therein: and will surely lead unto, and leave the sinners, that take up therewith, in the very Jaws of Death! I am not speaking of those Unhappy Men, who think upon their former evil waies, to take pleasure in them, and make a fresh recovery of the past sweetnesse thereof to themselves. *Those thoughts* are manifestly the Spawn of Hell, and are inspired from the bottomless Pit; whereto they hasten back again: but I condemn, and justly too, *such thoughts*, as seem to carry with them some seeming remorse for sin;

sin; but sink not * deep enough, and are not sufficiently rooted in the heart, to bring forth unto good effect, in thorough Reformation of the Life. If they can only tip the tongue with *Lord, Lord*; but let alone the while, and are not productive of the *doing of the Will of God*; they will never carry men to Heaven, if we will take *Christs* word, whilst he was on Earth, *Matt. 7. 21.*

3. That the next and most immediate cause and reason of *Mens* continuing in their wickedness without repentance, is their neglect of serious thoughts upon their waies and state. 'Tis very wonderful, that in a time of so much Gospel-light; and when there are so many plain and powerful Sermons both seen, and read, and heard; wherein sins mischief and the sinners misery are so clearly and fully opened; together with the Nature, Necessity, Excellency, and Felicity of Conversion unto Christ by an holy heart and life, so plentifully discovered; and all this from the plain and expresse Word of

3. Lesson.

* Cogitationes & affectiones necessariae sunt in conscientie mundatione: Cogitationes in investigatione veritatis, affectiones in exercitatione virtutis. Idm. de Interdom. c. 1.

Chap. 14. God, which will not deceive us; and whereby we must be judged at the last day: I say, 'tis very marvellous that *now*, the most secure, the hardiest, stoutest, and most desperate sinner should dare to stay one moment longer in the state he is in! 'Tis *so indeed*: Eternal Vengeance, like a naked sword, hang's o're his head; and he standeth on the very brink of the bottomless Lake. How knoweth he, but that the next moment that Sword may fall, and the ground moulder under him; he may give up the Ghost, and drop as fuel into Everlasting burnings? For such a one to be secure and careless, as if no danger could approach him; is it not matter of astonishment? Truly 'tis! And I remember, there was such a time, when our Blessed Lord himself *Marvelled at the peoples unbelief*, *Mark 6*. We may well be amazed, therefore. Now whereunto should this be properly assigned else, but unto *Mens great Inconsideratenes*? They will not seriously think upon their waies and state; and unto what an evil and dangerous pass, their Sins have brought them. Could they

they be prevailed on, but to * with- Chap. 14.
draw themselves a while from the noise
and hurry of Pleasures, Profits, Busi-
ness, Company, and the like engage-
ments; and to retire themselves into
themselves a little, that they might
Commune with their own Hearts, as *Da-
vid* speaks; and set their *Souls to make
a diligent search*, as *his* phrase is else-
where: would it not fare with them,
as it did with *Saul among the Prophets*,
who was *presently turned into another
Man thereby*? Surely, they also would
forthwith have another heart within
them. They would no longer stay in
the Suburbs of Hell: but make more
haste to fly from thence, than *Lot* did
out of *Sodom*. This hath been seen
before in several Instances; especially
in the *Prodigal*. But the refusal to
consider thus, makes men secure in
their Impenitency, to their Eternal
jeopardy.

* Cum nulla sit scientia melior illâ, quâ cognoscit ho-
mo seipsum; discutiamus cogitationes, locutiones, atque
opera nostra. Quid enim prodest si rerum omnium naturas
subtiliter investigemus, & nosmet ipsos non intelligen-
mus? Aug. de Spir. & An. c. 51.

Chap. 14.
4. Lesson.

4. That *those who are unacquainted with themselves, their spiritual state towards God, I mean; must needs be yet sad * strangers also unto Him.* We have heard, without these *serious Thoughts* there is not, in Gods settled Way, any sound Conversion to be found. And all Unconverted Persons are utterly out of Gods Acquaintance. That is, he takes no notice of them, with *peculiar kindness*; he doth not know them, *as a Friend*; nor will afford the saving Blessings of his Family to them. 'Tis true indeed, when ever Any are by Grace renewed in their heart and life, it may, and must be spoken to them, as the Apostle said unto the *sanctified Ephesians*, *Now ye are no more strangers and foreigners (which, then before they were) but fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God*, Eph. 2. 19. Such as these, are *free of the New Jerusalem*, and Members of the *Heavenly Court*: and so amongst Gods dearest friends and familiars; who both converse with, and are specially favour'd, and taken care of by him. And *what a Ravishing Bless-*

* *Accurata sui ipsius cognitio te veluti manu deducit ad notitiam Dei.*

sing is there here ; which Inconsiderate sinners do so wilfully rob themselves of ! They will not exercise their thoughts to purpose ; altho' so ample a Reward would follow it ! Here upon Earth, do we not see Men make all the friends they can ; lay out all their time and thoughts ; commonly sell their own Estates for it ; and too often pawn their very Soul too upon the bargain ; to purchase but an Ordinary Place in a Princes Court ? But to be Favourites with the King of Kings, is of so little value with unhappy sinners, that they will not be at so small a Cost, as serious Reflection on their waies and state, for the procuring of it. That great and good King, *David*, saith unto the Almighty, nothing but the very truth, in telling him, * *One day in thy Courts is better than a Thousand ; any where else*, understand, in all the World beside : and, he proceedeth, *I would rather be a Doorkeeper* (that meanest officer) *in thy house, than to dwell in the Tents* (you may safely add, and according to his

* *Bona vox, gaudenda vox, eligenda vox* ; Elegi, abjici in domo Domini, magis quam habitare in tabernaculis peccatorum. Aug. in *Psal.* 83.

Chap. 14. Mind and Heart, *In Pallaces*) of wickedness, Psal. 84. 10. Yet this is no Temptation ; it will not signifie with the Unconverted sinner ; to make him admit that little trouble, tho' for so great a benefit ; as but to enter into, and make a diligent search in his own heart and waies ; that so he may turn to God, and Christ, for the obtaining such an Infinite Blessing. He will, poor wretch ! rather continue still a stranger unto Both, altho to *know them* would be life eternal to him, John 17. 3.

5. Lesson.

5. That there are but Few ; *rare* * very few, of true, sincere, and real Christians in the world ; how many soever the Professors of Christianity be ; and the Pretenders to Integrity therein, are. For where are they, that have set themselves in earnest to search and try their waies, and turn unto the Lord, their God ? Are they not like the Gatherings after harvest, and the Gleanings when then Vintage is over ? To examine their Estates in the World ; to cast up their Shop-Books ; to consider of the Debts they stand in unto Others,

* *Rari quippe Boni : numero vix sunt totidem quot Thebarum porte, vel divitis ostia Nilii.* Juven. Sat. 13.

and others unto them ; this, the good Chap. 14.
Husbands of this World are busie at ;
and there are good store of Men that
take this prudent Course. But for their
Souls ; to inquire diligently after their
Condition ; and cast up truly how the
reckoning stands betwixt God and
them, where are the Persons thus concerned ? 'Tis a great duty of Christianity,
*To examine our selves, and to prove
our own selves* : witness the Apostle
Paul's command unto this Practice,
2 Cor. 13. 5. And such a search and
trial is meant, as Artists make use of Πειραζετε, a Πει-
in passing through the *surface* of a ρα, to
thing ; and [particularly Goldsmiths] πierce
to distinguish Mettals, the true from through.
false ; by bringing them to the Touch-
stone, or the Fire. Now the Word of Δοκιμα-
God would serve for a *Piercer*, *Touch-*
stone, or *Fire*, to shew men their Con-
dition, were their hearts and waies
brought thereunto, & compared there-
with. But who are they that take this
Course amongst the forwardest in Pro-
fession ? Do we not see, from the neg-
lect of this, what reason there is of that
sad saying of our Saviour, *Many are
called ; but few chosen*, Mat. 20. 16 ?
And wherefore, he should call his
Flock

Chap. 14. *Flock a little one*, Luk. 12. 32 ? Yea, why the Apostle Paul should say, *Though Israel were as the Sand upon the shore, yet but a remnant should be saved*, Rom. 9. 27 ? And is not that a small proportion to the whole peece ? Perhaps One *Nail*, half *quarter*, or a *quarter* unto *many yards* ! Christianity reacheth, truly, very far : but sincere Christians we see are very few ; so few do trouble themselves about the *serious thoughts* of their waies and state toward God ! Oh. when so many shall prove negligent herein, what cause have *all of us* to be much concern'd about it ? More reason sure have we by far to be solicitous, whether *our selves* be not also guilty, than the Disciples had, when but *One in Twelve* should prove so bad. And yet they *every one*, with Care, and Fear, became inquisitive, *Lord, is it I, is it I ?* Mat 26. 22. Let us do after their Example.

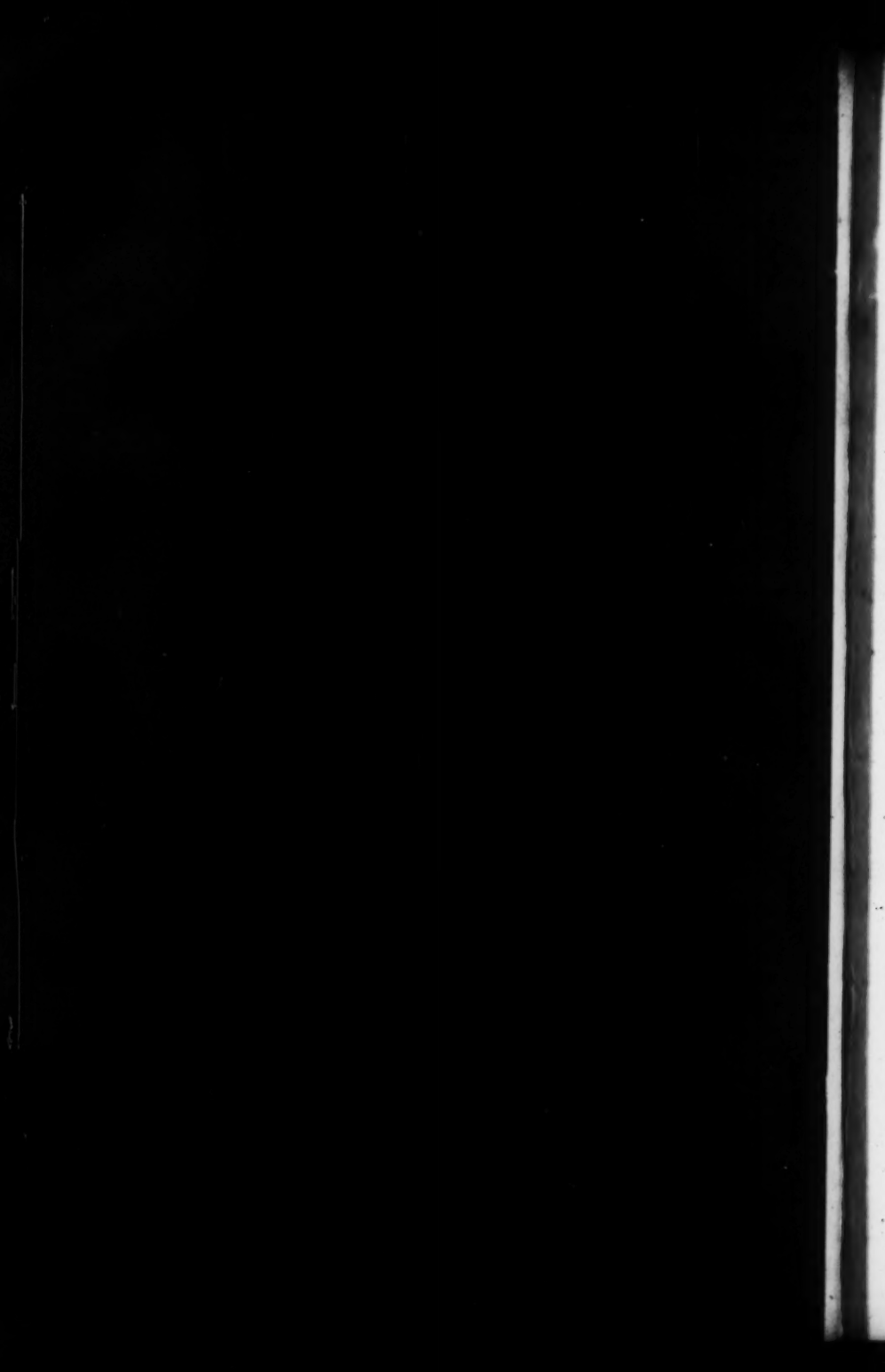
6. Lesson. 6. In the last place ; Those *Friends*, and *Preachers* are most *faithful* ; those *Sermons*, and *Discourses* are most *useful* and *desirable* ; that touch our *Consciences*, and raise up there, the *serious thoughts* upon our waies and state. For this is the Way, and Means unto Conversion,
and

and Salvation. Concerning *Friends*, Chap. 14.

Parents or *Others* ; their advice may be worth the heeding, which hath respect to our disposal of our selves in an honest Calling ; unto the Husbanding of our time well, the right management of our trade, the wise providing for our health, and such like matters. But what are we indebted to them, if they be earnest in directing of us in the way to Heavven, in pressing us to consider the condition of our Souls, that we may turn from sin to *Jesus Christ* ? This is the greatest and truest Friendship, altho' so little found in the World ! And so, as touching *Ministers*, whose business 'tis to *lay the Ax to the root of the Tree* ; They, that approve themselves *True Boanerges's*, Sons of Thunder ; Not to *sow Pillows to all arm-holes* ; but to convince men of the heinous Evil, and desperate danger of a Natural and Sinful State ; or as *Isaiah* phraseth it, *To cry aloud and spare not : to lift up their voices like a trumpet, and shew to Men and Women their sins and their transgressions* (Isa. 58. 1.) That they may *make ready a people prepared for the Lord*, as 'tis expressed, *Luk. 1. 17.* Who by sad thoughts upon their waies,
will

Chap. 14. will now be willing to turn from sin, and come to Christ, and obey the Gospel: These, are *Gods faithful Messengers, and Mens truest Friends!* And their Sermons, of this kind, are those seasonable words, like *Apples of Gold in pictures of Silver*: things of greatest Curiosity, and most excellent art! *Other Discourses*, which respect not Mens Conversion, and Edification unto Life Eternal, let them be adorned, and set off at never so trim a rate, they are no better than Romances, or meer Pageantries; sorry and worthless things in comparison: and the *Composers*, and *Preachers of them*, tho' they may act the Great Logicians, Brave Orators, Excellent Antiquaries, and Incomparable Linguists, are no better than *Loyterers* in stead of *Labourers* in *Gods Harvest*: for they house no Corn for him; as it is plain by such behaviour, they never meant it. Where doth, or can, Repentance, Reformation, and Salvation follow such Endeavours? As for those others, whom we call *Ministers*, but the Prophet styleth *Blind Watchmen; Ignorant and Dumb Dogs, that cannot Bark, sleeping, lying down and loving*

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to slumber, Isa. 56. 10. if such there Chap. 14.

* any where be (and why not now, as well as heretofore in the only Church of God?) as these men have more wickedness, than what above is mentioned ; which the two next verses shew ; so the *bloud of peoples souls* God will require at their hands one day, as the *convicted Murderers* of them, * Ezek. 33. 8. Wo be to those that aim at *Wages* ; but are not for *Work* : all, for † *Greatness*, but mind not *Goodness*. Is it not the *Ministers Office*, To *Preach the Word* ; and to be *instant at it*, in and out of season ? which surely utter silence is far enough from : and opening of the Mouth but once a Quarter, or a Month, or (I fear,) a Week, if health and strength permit, will scarce come near enough unto.

* *Quid nos, O Pastores, agimus qui, & mercedem consequimur, & operarii nequaquam sumus ? Illa in stipendium nostrum sumimus, quæ pro peccatis suis redimendis fideles obtulerunt : nec tamen contra peccata eadem Del præcipit studio, vel predicationis (ut dignum est) insudamus. Vix pro culpâ suâ quempiam apertâ voce reprehendimus: Greg. M. Hom. 17. * Quis ad hæc non contremiscat ? Quis ista, sine intolerabili metu future examinationis, accipiat ; nisi qui aut non intelligat, aut futura non credat ? vide plura ejusmodi ap. Prosp. de vitâ Contempl. l. 1. c. 21.*

† *Si altiore quam meliorem esse delectat ; non præmii sed præcipitium expectamus. Bernh. Ep. 27.*

Q

And

Chap. 14. And in what manner should this diligence of theirs proceed? It follows, by *reproving, rebuking, and exhorting, with all long-suffering and with patience,* 2 Tim. 4. 2. Which plainly doth, and of necessity must intend, the making Men *reflect with seriousness upon their waies, that they may be turned from their sin to God.* And this is Preaching to good purpose; and indeed, 'tis no adventure, to pronounce it, *only Good*; to be sure, it cannot but be the *best*. Whereto that I may my self, by Gods assistance, labour to attain in some poor degree, I shall go on to the second general Inference, *viz. Of Exhortation.*

CHAP.

C H A P. XV.

2. Exhortation. 1. Case reason'd

1. Demand: Is't not Duty? 2.

Demand, what call'd from? 3.

Demand, what to? 4. Demand,

who gratified by stay in Sin? 5.

Demand, what a base requital is

it unto Jesus Christ? 6 Demand,

Is not delay too much already? 7.

Demand, will not what now hin-

ders, hinder as bad or worse here-

after? 8. Demand, If nothing

will prevail, How scape at last?

2. **A**ND now upon the whole that ^{2 Inference} hath been spoken, let me be ^{Exhorta-} speak you, Brethren, in the Apostles ^{tion.} language, *suffer the word of Exhortation.* Consider, I beseech you, of your *waies, and turn ye speedily from your sins to God.* Of the Success, your *serious* thoughts are like to have unto Conversion, and so Salvation, you heard but

Q 2

lately;

Chap. 15. lately; and of what Importance and Necessity *that* is unto you, so much hath been before discoursed, that I cannot think that any Man, not renouncing Christianity, is able to avoid a full Conviction. What now is wanting, save that you presently apply yourselves unto a suitable practice? Therefore, arise, and tarry not: up, and be doing; and the Lord will bless you in your deed.

But men are dull of hearing, slower in believing, and most backward to obey the Greatest Commands of the God and Judge of all the World. With your patience therefore, my purpose is, by the Divine Assistance, to do this further double service for the *Unconverted sinner*.

1. *Reason the Case with him.*
2. *Lay down a few Directions for him.*

And then commend both him, and them to God; from whom alone, tho' *Paul* were planting, and *Apollo* watering, the whole increase must be expected.

Then;

I. Then; For Reasoning the Case Chap. 15.
with him: let Me, remembering how 1. Reasoning the Case.
 the Almighty (who honoureth faithful Ministers to go as his Ambassadors unto People) once said himself to sinners, *Come now, and let us reason together*; I say, let Me too; in his Name, invite and call upon you, who are here present, *To Come, and apply your selves unto this Work*; that we may (in the Fear of God) reason the Case together a while. Sirs, *Wherefore do you not seriously think upon your waies, and turn you from your sins to God? Why is not Satans service quitted by you, and Jesus Christ entertained as your Lord and Saviour? What is the Matter, this Business is not instantly, and without delay performed?* Pray, let me be particular in some Enquiries with you, that deserve a sober answer in your Hearts.

I. Are you not Convinced, 'tis your 1. Demand.
Duty so to do? If you are Christians, you believe the Holy Scriptures: and and if the Scriptures be believed by you, you can't be ignorant with what a *Sunbeam* This is written there! 'Tis Evident, that both the *Prophets* and *Apostles* have their several Books there-

Chap. 15. with bespangled, in a manner, as the Firmament is with Stars. I must conclude you will all Confess, that you are bound *immediately* to flee from sin, as from the Plague, or rather as from Hell it self : and *forthwith* to obey Christ Jesus in his Gospel, as the Only Antidote to save your Souls. And will you yet continue *where* you were ; and *what* you have been ! Should I forbear that frightful Question ; *How can you answer this to God ; to know his will, and yet not prepare your selves, nor do accordingly ?* Must not heavy, as well as many stripes be such mens portion, *Luk. 12. 47 ?* Will not Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah ; not thus instructed, and convinced, as you are ; have an Easie Hell to yours, *Mat. 11. 22, 24 ?* But sparing that, let me urge you with another, that you may think less terrible. Sinners ; *how can you account for this unto your selves ?* What satisfaction can be afforded unto your own Reason ? Willfully to neglect a Method, of sure and infinite advantage to you ; and pursue a Course, that brings inevitable and eternal Mischief ! The *Fish* will make what shift they can, to scape the Net, *Birds* take the Wing to

to avoid the Gun. And the *Hare*, to throw off the Dogs, and save its life, makes all the speed its able, for the Thicket. Meer Nature prompts the very *Brutes*, unto the utmost endeavours of their own preservation. But sinful Man, a Reasonable Creature; to lose all sense, and prove so sottish, and unnatural to himself, as to see, and chuse, his own destruction! This is his Case, who turns not from his sin! His own hand, and dagger, stabs himself to the * Heart. Can it now be said of a Sinner, *Behold the Man!* May we say so much as, *Loe, here's the Brute!* Must it not be pronounced, *He is a very Devil to himself!* Will any of you then be any longer *such*? Will you not presently think upon your waies, and turn without delay to God? But, *let us reason further.*

2. *What is it, I beseech you, that I* ^{2. Demand} *am calling of you from, whilst, I am urgent with you, forthwith to forsake your sin?* If I am perswading you to leave a pleasant *Eden*, a garden of God, for an howling wilderness: to quit a *Ca-*

* Ορᾶυλθ' ὑπὸ πρὶ ἐστὶν αὐτῷ φίλθ', &c.
M:lus nunquam sibi amicus est: se namque semper oppug-
nat. Arist. Magn. Mor. l. 2. c. 11.

Chap. 15. *naan*, a Land of Promise, flowing with Milk and Honey, for a Servile *Egypt*: to turn your backs upon a comfortable and happy Condition, for a sad and lamentable state of Life: as for Example, to change Plenty for Poverty, Honour for Disgrace, Liberty for Thralldom, Health for Sicknes, Life for Death, or the like: common sense will bid you, not only pause upon the business; but with highest scorn, reject my Motion. But your selves can't think, that you are so abused. In saying, *'Tis to turn from sin*; is, to assure you, *'Tis to turn from the very worst of Evils*; indeed, from whatsoever is, or can be, truly ** *Bad unto thee*. Who doth not know, what an *Hellish Monster Sin* is? Can you be ignorant, that it is, *Gods Hatred*; *Man's Plague*; only, the *Devils Pleasure*! This is the Womb, wherein is conceived, and from whence cometh forth, whatsoever mischeif at any time hath fallen, doth, or shall ever hereafter, fall upon the Earth. And it never leaveth off from doing Mischief, till it

* *Malorum omnium nostrorum Causa Peccatum est.* Aug. De temp. Serm. 139.

* *Ἀμαρτία μὲν κακόν.* Chrys. Hom. 56. in *Joh. 9.*
hath

hath sunk Earth down into Hell it Chap. 15.
 self. This stains thy noble Soul, and
 makes it foul and black, as is the De-
 vil : fils thy Body with Diseases : and
 bringeth a Curse on all thy Blessings;
 and in the Issue, without forsaking it,
 will make thee fuel for Everlasting
 burnings! 'Tis only *This*, that I am
 urging of thee from. And shouldst
 thou be so loath to leave it! so fond
 of staying longer with it! Is here a
Loveliness to enamour thee: Yea, to
 bewitch thee rather? Shouldst thou
 make choice to part with *God*, and to
 lose thy *Soul*, rather than let *it* go?
 Ought'st not thou to be more joyful
 in making a present escape from *this*;
 than the poor Captive would, from
 the *Turkish* Gally, or *Spanish* Mines?
 Should it not glad thine Heart to be in-
 stantly rid of such a sorry Guest as *this*?
 Why dost not thou rowse up thy
 Soul, and forthwith quit the Tents of
 this Accursed Thing!

Come ; yet further.

3. What do I call you to? And *whi-* 3. De-
ther would I have you go? Is it unto a mand:
 Place, or Matter, that would do you
 hurt, and bring you dammage; or at
 the best, prove but unworthy of your
 minding:

Chap. 15. minding; there is so little, or no good at all therein? I acknowledge, then you had but little reason to regard my motion, were I never so earnest in it. Who is so mad, to throw himself into the Sea, that he may be drowned? Or leap into the fire, to be burned? Or run into the midst of Armed Enemies, to be destroyed? No man is forward to expose either Life or Limb, or Goods or Monies to apparent hazard, for no reason at all. No, truly: nor will any man care to sweat, and blow, and venture hard for getting thither, and procuring that, where when he hath arrived, and obtained it, is nothing worth the having. But sinner; thou art not dealt with thus by me. Mine Exhortation is not to have thee, where thou shalt be damnified; nor unto that, which will be little useful to thee. Nay; 'tis to what thy self wilt say, is infinitely worthy of thee. I call thee unto *God*, Man! To *God*: the **Soveraign, Chiefest*; and I may safely say, unto the *Only Good*. I would have thee come to *God*; Whose, all

** Summum Bonum, quo superius non est, Deus est. Cetera omnia Bona non nisi ab illo sunt. Aug. de natur. Boni. c. 1.*

things are in Heaven and Earth ; Who can supply thee with whatsoever thou needest ; and Who certainly will bestow upon thee, more than thine own heart desireth, if thou sincerely turn unto him. *He is a Sun, and Shield ; both to enlighten, comfort, and defend thee : He will give Grace and Glory ;* Grace to guide thee here, and Glory to bless thee for ever hereafter : And if thou thinkest, yet, 'tis not enough ; *No good thing will he withhold from thee, if thou walk uprightly with him,* Pj. 84. 11. I do not invite thee to the World, which will deceive thee : nor do I call thee unto Satan ; who will now tyrannize over thee, and at last torment thee. But I perswade thee unto God ; Who (if thou leave thy sin and come to him) will be a *Friend*, and *Father* to thee ; ne're do thee hurt, but good unto Eternal Ages ; bestow his promises on thee in *Possession*, and his Kingdom in *Reversion* ! Is this, to bid thee to thy loss ; when I would have thee part with sin for God ? How canst thou shut thine eyes So close, as not to see the Infinite advantage in this Exchange ? And wilt thou yet continue where thou art : and not im-

medi-

Chap. 15. mediately make this blessed bargain?
Come; yet again.

4. Demand.

4. Whom do you, I beseech you, gratify, pleasure, and shew kindness to, by your longer stay in sin and wickedness? I am most certain neither *Men*, nor *Angels*; no nor *God* himself, to be sure. For *Men*; those that are *bad*, are further mischiefed by your evil Example: and *good* people mourn over you, for that woe which is coming on you. Touching the *Angels* of God; if they *rejoyce* at the Conversion of a sinner, (*Luke* 15. 10); may we not with reason thence infer, that they are *sorry* then for your impenitency? And concerning the *Almighty* himself; The *Holy Spirit*, in the Apostles phrase, is *grieved*, *Eph.* 4. The *Son of God* wept over *Jerusalem*, for her self-destroying sins, *Luke* 19; Yea, and *God the Father* is often rendred in the sacred Writ, as a Lamentor for the incorrigibleness of wicked Men. Witness that One, instead of many places, *Pf.* 81: 13. *Oh! that my people had hearkned unto me: and Israel had walked in my waies!* Seemeth not the Lord, to *sigh* and *groan*; because they would not turn unto him? So that, what the
Apostle

Apostle speaketh of the refractory Chap. 15.
Jews, we may aptly apply to all im-
 penitent sinners, *They please not God,*
and are contrary unto all men, 1 *Thef. 2.*

It remaineth therefore, that your con-
 tinuance in Iniquity, and delay of
 turning unto God, is * *a pleasure only*
to the Devil. And let me ask it of
 your *Consciences*; should you do thus,
 to do him service, is he indeed so
 well-deserving at your hands? *He*;
 that is now both restless in his *tempting*,
 and will be so hereafter in tormenting
 you. What kindness did he ever do
 you? What mischief is he not alwaies
 acting, or contriving against you? *Is*
he not a Roaring Lyon that walketh a-
bout seeking whom he may devour? And
 will you, any longer, displease your
 best Friend, *God*; to pleasure your
 worst Enemy, *Satan*? This is the
 course you take, by living still in Sin,
 and by delaying your return to God.
 And will you still remain the same?
 And not make hast to turn?

Come, let me again enquire.

5. Is it not a shameful, and most 5. De-
mand.

* *Peccando, Diabolum validum ac potentem reddi-*
mus, nec eo usq; sistit extrema amentia; sed quæ et etiam
letitiam & exultationem afferant, comparamus Chrys.
ex Genian. Vers. Ps. 12.

base

Chap. 15. base requital of the Blessed Jesus, if you shall still be wicked, and delay repenting? What blackest brand of the most vile Ingratitude, and foulest Disingenuity, do you imprint indelibly upon your selves by doing so? Is this your recompence to that Amazing kindness, which the Eternal Son of God, and Saviour of the world, hath manifested to the Souls of Sinners! Did he, *for this*, lay by his *Robes*; or cover them at the least with our Rags; when he came down from Heaven to Earth, and took upon him not the *Nature of Angels*, but the *seed of Abraham*, and was made Man? Was it *for this*, that he who was the Lord of All, would stoop so low as to *take upon him the form of a servant*? For *this*, that he exposed himself unto the miseries of humane Life; enduring hunger, thirst, cold and labours, &c. without a *Hole to put his head in*, (*Matt. 8. 20.*) that might be cal'd his own? For *this*, that he laid down his Life, a Ransome for your *Lives*; yea. for your *Souls*; that they might not dye, and perish to a sad Eternity; which else had certainly, and unavoidably been your doleful portion? But who is able to reckon
up

up the infinite Blessings Jesus Christ Chap. 13.
 procur'd and brought unto the Children of men! But that he should dye for *them*; that they might not dye eternally, but live for ever: and dye a Death, so *shameful, painful, and accursed*: and for those Men, that were not worthy of such a kindness; nay, never asked for it; yea, were deserving highly of Eternal Vengeance; What Tongue of Men, or Angels can express the *ravishing bounty of the* * Grace herein! And after all, to find his *Life and Death* for sinners thus requited! To see his *Grace* despised, his *Spirit* grieved, his *Bloud* trampled on! To have *sin* stil served, the *Devil* pleased, and all *Christs* tender Mercies disappointed! Who can think seriously of it, without * confusion and astonishment? And yet this is the very behaviour of a neglect to turn to God, and a life in sin! *Thus, ye Delayers of*

* O quam indebita miseratio, quàm gratuita, et sic probata dilectio; quam inopinata dignatio, quam stupenda dulcedo, quam involuta mansuetudo! Regem glorie pro despicatissimo vernaculo, imò vermiculo, crucifigi! Bernh. de quadrupl. Deb. Serm. Cum ergo Eì donavero quicquid sum, quicquid possum, nonne istud sic est, sicut stella ad solem, gutta ad fluvium, lapis ad montem, granum ad acervum? Iom. infr. * Meritisne hæc gratia tantis redditur? Hac vitam donat am dote rependis? Virgil.

Repen-

Chap. 15. Repentance, *thus*, ye requite the *Blessed Jesus*, who hath done and suffered so much for you. May I not well upbraid you in *Moses Words*, Do ye *thus* requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise, *Deut.* 32. 6 ? And can any sinner find in his heart to be any longer such an Unworthy Wretch, as this ? To recompence evil to a Gracious Saviour for so much good, by the abiding with his Sins one moment more.

Come, yet again.

6. Demand.

6. Have you not been long enough already, (yea, and too long of any Conscience) at your put off's, and delays to God and Christ ? Hath not the Blessed Jesus been a great while already, it may be 20, 30, or 40 years, or more, for ought we know, knocking at your Souls door, and calling loudly in its Eare ? And is it not high time, do you think, to hear, and rise, and open to him *now* ? Long importunity of an inferiour person, the poor *Widow*, prevailed with the *Unjust Judge*, that feared neither God nor Man. *Luke* 18. But your *Superiour* ; yea the *Supream* and *Sovereign Judge* of all the World ; not to prevail, with his long earnestness, upon you, his *Subjects*, *Vassals*, *Creatures* !

tures ! How much incomparably, Chap. 15.

worse, dare you to deal with God, than the Wicked Judge did with the Poor Widow? And what is like to come of this? Pray, are your selves apt to take it well of your ordinary Neighbours; should they serve you at this rate: to put you off with delays, and boggle with you upon a fair and equal request, or suit, that you are earnest with them in? And must the Almighty like it, from such as you: *Wormes* rather than Men; meer *Dust* and *Ashes*? But I beseech you, do not your selves expect and hope, and wish, that God may hear you, in your troubles, when you call upon him; and that without delay, and tarrying long? Shall not *we all* make use of *David's* words then; *Make hast to help me: O Lord, make no tarrying, Ps. 70. 1, 5*? And do not your souls blush; are not your Faces covered with shame: to think that you should make God wait your leisure thus, and be so slow to answer him? Besides all this, poor *Sinner*, dost thou consider, what thou art a doing, whilst thou art thus delaying? Why? In good truth, 'tis nothing else, but displeasing God; be-

Chap. 15. friending Satan ; and destroying thine own Soul ! Surely, thy self wilt say ; all this hath been too long, and too much, already done ! Dost think too, what an *Eternal Walk* thou hast before thee ; how near thy Sun is unto setting ; and how much thy strength is tired ? And notwithstanding all, canst thou be still content to laze, and loyter, to ly down, and sleep yet longer in thy sinful, and therefore most dangerous estate ? Our Saviour said, *He must work whilst 'twas day : the night was coming when none could work, Joh. 9. 4.* And wilt not thou be roused up to present Action ; altho' the shadowes of the Evening be upon thee ; the Grave is gaping for thee ; and the* Day of Judgment just a calling on thee ?

Come, let us not make an end yet ;

7. Demand.

Sinner, 7. If thou turn not now to Christ from sin ; how canst thou reasonably hope, that thou shalt ever turn at all unto him ? I do not mean to repeat the horrible Jeopardies on thee, by the loss of *life*, or *means*, or an *heart* to use them unto purpose, whereof I

* *Sive comedam, sive bibam, sive aliquid aliud faciam, semper vox illa detur sonare in auribus meis : Surge mortui, et venite ad iudicium. Hieron.*

spake before. Only remember, there is no little danger thence, that thy Repentance is never like to be, if it be not now. But what I aim at here, is to convince thee, that *whatsoever it be* that bars thy present Turning, is like to be as great or greater hindrance hereafter to thee.

1. Suppose thou be a kind of secret Infidel, tho' outwardly professing the Christian Faith. Shouldst thou be doubtful about an Heaven, and Hell, for the Rewards of Good Men, and Bad hereafter. Iniquity continued in directly tends to make thee confident of that Hellish, and damning Error. And how past Remedy then will thy Condition be?

2. Or say, Thy lusts have made thee so their Slave; that thou canst not think with any patience of the present forsaking of them. Why, thy longer stay with them will make the matter worser still. They gain upon thee daily more and more. Yea, thou givest them opportunity to chain thy feet, and bind thine hands, and put out thine eyes, as the *Philistines served Sampson*, by longer tarrying with them. And then thou art in the Sub-

Chap. 15. urbs of Hell already !

3. Or is Repentance an unpleasing work ; and that perswades thee yet to lay it by a while ? 'Twill ever be the same to Flesh and Bloud : altho' in truth, there be not any just reason for it. For *Christs yoke is easie*, and *none of his Commandements are grievous* : say the World, or Devil what they will, *Matt. 11. 30. 1 John 5. 3.* But suppose, thou shalt think otherwise, and take Repentance for no pleasant work : I would ask thee then, Whether a *Bitter Potion* will grow sweeter by longer standing ? I doubt, such kind of Medicines not only seem, but really are, more fulsome ; when you have forborn them longer. This we are sure of, if a strait yoke shall pinch a younger, smaller, thinner neck : it must needs gall One that time hath made grow thicker, and larger than it was. If it be hard to bend thee now : when sin hath further hardned thee, thou art like to break.

4. Or doth thy business hinder thee at present ? Why, to be sure, hereafter thou wilt alwaies have either *Farm*, or *Oxen*, or one *Worldly Care* or other to stop thy way as bad, or worse. We see,

see, the nearer men are to their Graves, their minds do commonly become more earthly. However Satan, unto whom thou art a present Slave, will alwaies find thee work enough, I'll warrant it. He is a true *Egyptian Task-master*; to increase thy burden, and double thy task, when ever thou shalt think of leaving him.

5. Or dost thou stay, to see thy betters go before thee? Alas! Thou may'st stay long enough indeed then. All Good men shall be one day Great: but few Great Men do now prove Good! 'Tis the Apostles Speech; *Not many wise men, not many mighty, not many noble are called,* 1 Cor. 1. 26. But perhaps thy meaning only is; to have thy Neighbours company along with thee: thou would'st not take upon thee to be wiser than they! And what if *Lot* had been of this mind, to have stay'd in *Sodom* till his Neighbours would have left it with him? We are sure, he must have left himself to have been consumed to Ashes.

6. To conclude; Dost wait to have the *Holy Spirit* come in upon thee with greater power; and so by might and main (as we are wont to say) over-

Chap. 15. come thee to Repentance? Fond and foolish Creature! Thou expectest to have thy sayles fil'd; and dost not spread them yet! Thou look'st to speed thy Voyage with Wind and Tyde favouring thee; but still lye'st lazing in the harbour, and hast not weighed thine Anchor yet! The Holy Spirit *now* is working for thee: and I nothing doubt, but he is working in thee too, whilst I am speaking to thee. Is not thine heart stirred in thee? Are there no Convictions on thee? Do no good thoughts and purposes struggle within thee? And are not these the offers of the Holy Spirits help unto thee? Beware, Delaying sinners, lest God say to you, as he did to the Incorrigible Jews, *Act. 7. 51. Ye do alwaies resist the Holy Ghost.* This thy * refusal of his help, is the ready course to cause him *never*, with the offer of it, to visit thee more. For *he shall not alwaies strive with man*, Gen. 6. 3.

And so, it cometh to this issue, *Either now repent, or never think it shall*

* Qui ab iniquitatibus suis recedere negligunt, nunquam ita praeveniuntur repentino Dei furore, ut nec conversionis tempus, nec beneficium remissionis inveniunt, Aug. de fid. ad P. Diac. c. 3.

be done hereafter. For whatsoever it be that hinders now, will prove as great, if not a greater Let in time to come. And if it *never be done, thou art undone for ever!*

For *Come, this one time more let us reason together.* And,

3. If after all that hath been said un- 8. Demand
to you; I think, with clearest Evidence to your Minds, and closest application to your Consciences; you will *still stand off from Christ, go on in sin, and further serve the Devil*; How can you escape, the just displeasure, the sorest wrath, the severest vengeance of Almighty God for ever? When He hath shewed such undeserved pity to you, made such gracious provisions for you, waited with so much patience on you, and used such obliging, convincing, and constraining Arguments with you; if after all, you will be still what you have been heretofore; make him lose all his love and labour towards you; give him the hearing but regard him not; prefer the gratifying of your vilest lusts, and serving of the Devil of Hell, and damning of your immortal Souls, before the Faith on a Merciful Jesus, Obedience to an
R 4 holy

Chap. 15. holy Gospel, and Salvation of your selves for ever ; what will, or can, or should, betyde ycu ; but the most *Woful*, *Eafclefs*, and *Eternal* Misery ! Read, ponder on, and tremble at *Heb. 2. 3.* *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation ?* That is, in plainer English ; As 'tis *unreasonable* ; 'tis *impossible* likewise, that we should. The *Salvation* offer'd to you, is Great, even to Amazement ! And the *Damnation*, which your contempt thereof will bring upon you, must be Great, even to Astonishment ! *Contempt*, did I say ? The *Neglect* (a much softer word) will do it. And all *Delayers*, are undeniable *Neglecters* ! For, I beseech you Sirs, think with your selves, what you can have to say to God on your own behalf at the great Reckning Day. Will you find in your hearts to tell him then ; *Lord, Sin was too pleasant to be forsaken, and Godliness too severe and sowre to be imbraced by us ; Christ Jesus did not deserve accepting ; nor indeed was Heaven worth the having ?* We have Cause to Fear, These are your present Thoughts : but sure enough, you will then be of another Mind. Most certainly, you will never dare to tell God
so

so to his Face, when you are standing Chap. 19.
at his Bar of Judgement. What then?
Can you pretend, *you never had the ti-*
dings of Salvation sent you? Or, that you
had no faithful Preacher with you? One
to instruct you, of the horrible Evil and
danger of Sin: the flat necessity of saving
Grace, and of present Turning from your
Evil waies to Jesus Christ? Can you say
to God; *You were not argued, and rea-*
soned with at all: had not any plain Con-
victions that came close unto you, and
with Power on you? Will not the Ser-
mons you have formerly heard upon
this Subject; and what you are now
attending to; beside those many others,
at other times and places which you
have enjoyed; will they not all, bear
witness on Gods part against you, to
the utter amazing, silencing, and con-
demning of you? Will it not be evi-
dent, how exceeding Gracious God
hath been to you, and that beyond
the measure which he hath meted un-
to many thousand others? Oh! what
will you find to say for your selves, (if
yet you will be careless) why the sen-
tence of Eternal Death should not be
pass'd upon you? How will your
faces be ashamed, your mouths be
stop't

Chap. 15. stop't, and your Souls for ever be confounded ; if you still be negligent ! O ! * think ; and think again upon it ! How will you tear your hair, and gnaw your flesh, and stab your very hearts then ; to think, how fair a way was once shewed you unto bliss, but you would not walk therein : how wide the door of heaven stood open to you, but you would not enter in thereby : how surely you might been made happy for ever, had you but rowled up your selves to regard your Duty, and your interest ! But your lazy, sottish, senseless Souls chose Misery ; and behold, 'tis come upon you ; and must be your portion to a sad Eternity ! For *how can you escape, if still you will neglect so great Salvation !*

See, my Dear Brethren ; I have reason'd the Case with you, and made several weighty Demands to you ; and cannot but presume that the Cause is

* *Cogita quot anima in Inferno nunc cruciantur, sine spe veniæ & misericordiæ. Si amor Dei te tenere non potest, saltem teneat & terreat timor judicii, metus gehennæ, laquei mortis, dolores inferni, ignis urens, vermis corrodens, fulgur fetens, flamma tartarrea, & omnia mala. Discute adhuc teipsum, ut scias quid deerit tibi : ne in illa ultimâ discussione coram omnibus confundaris, si inventa fuerit in te iniquitas. Bernh. de Inter. dom. c. 93.*

clearly

clearly carried, and by your own Judgement too. What then can be the matter? Wherefore should you * linger in a business of such grand importance? Why do you not presently think upon your waies, and turn you unto God? Surely, your Convictions strike you dumb with silence, as to any Colour of Defence for your delaying to come to Christ, and forsake iniquity. I would fain conclude your *hearts are burning in you*, whilst this Discourse is hearing by you. And am very apt to hope, that some of you, at least, are now resolved, *To be such wicked Fools to God, and to your Souls no longer.*

Is this the Case? And are you secretly enquiring in the Jaylers Language, *What shall we do to be saved?* And your mouthes about to speak aloud in the New-Converted Apostles Words, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Why then, Cherish still those Infant resolutions, and I shall offer you a few *Directions*; not doubting of Gods Blessing with them to your Eternal Benefit, if you will but honestly follow them.

* *Quid nobis iniqui sumus, & sapientiam suscipere cunctamur?* Lactant. Di. Just. l. 3. ad fin. c. 30.

C H A P. XVI.

Secondly, Directions given. 1. Presently, accept of Christ as Lord and Saviour. 2. Abandon all Sin. 3. Apply to all Duty. 4. Be acquainted with Scriptures. 5. Raise and maintain a watch, on Men; Self, Thy Thoughts, Affections, Senses. 6. Begin, and be constant at Prayer.

1. Direction.

Sinner, 1. **P**resently accept with all thy heart of Jesus Christ, as thy only Lord and Saviour. As thou dost seem, to our opinion, to be resolved that this shall be done; so do not stay, but do the same, and go through with it, this very moment before the next. And from this Instant be quite another, and a New Man, from what thou wast. Consider; Conscience is now stirring in thee; the Holy Spirit is now striving with thee; and the Blessed Jesus in his Gospel is now telling of thee; Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

vation. Therefore do not delay, so Chapter 16.
 much as till anon. Whilst God is willing, be thou also willing; and conclude the bargain with him. Let your hearts speak unto Christ *now*, as the Church did heretofore, *Isa. 26. 13. O Lord our God, other Lords besides thee have had dominion over us; viz. the Flesh, and World, and Devil: but now, by thee only* (by the assistance of thy special Grace, that is) it never shall be so again, *we will make mention of thy Name alone.* Say ye just now unto him; *Blessed Jesus, Who art the Author of Eternal Salvation to them that do obey thee (Heb. 5. 9.) We have been Rebels long, and too long against thee: behold, now, we lay down our Arms, submit unto thee, and henceforth own thee for our only Lord and Saviour: never so much as once more thinking, that Bliss and comfort can be any where found; but in the God of all Consolation; neither in Riches, nor in Honours, nor in Pleasures; which at the best make but a smoother way to Hell: Or that any Other Name, or Means whatever, can bring us unto God and Bliss, but only thy satisfaction and intercession; not Saints, or Angels; no, nor works of righteousness*

Chap. 16. *ness which we have done : and that the benefit of thy Death, and Life may be made over to us ; we do, just now, without delay, * receive thee, rest upon thee, and devote our selves unto thee ; no more to serve our former Lusts, but to make thy Word our Law for ever ; to meditate therein day and night, to be both bearers, and the Doors of it. Do thus, Beloved, if you love your Soules ; without any more ado. Be not almost perswaded, as Agrippa was : Say not with Felix, Another time : but follow Blessed Pauls Example, who conferred not with Flesh and Blood, but immediately set about his work in earnest, Act. 26. 19. Gal. 1. 16. Go ye and do likewise. Say not to morrow, or hereafter : but this day, and hour, be sure to hear his Voice, and harden not your hearts.*

2: Direction.

Sinner, 2. *Presently abandon, and forsake whatever sinful way or course thou hast been hitherto engaged in ; and never more have ought to do therewith. Altho'*

** O quantâ felicitate dotatur, quantâ beatitudine fecundatur ; Cui, preter Christum, omnia vilescunt, & ipse Christus solus mellefcit ! Ipse Christus solus sit in cordibus nostris favescat, & cuncta transitoria fellefcant ; ut nihil præter illum nobis jam libeat nec libescere jam valeat. Bernh. in Coen. Dom. Serm. 11.*

thine

thine evil heart shall be making Pleas in the behalf thereof, be utterly deaf thereto. Should it be urged; that it is of valuable use and service to thee, in point of profit, or of pleasure, or any thing else; or that it hath been of long standing friendship, and bred up with thee from thy youth, and so thy dear Companion many years; or that 'tis but a puny trespass, a peccadillo not worth the taking notice of; or whatsoever other * sorry pretence may be suggested: *if it be sin*, and condemned by Gods word, instantly discharge, and rid thy hands of it.

Sinners, You must deal with iniquity in your heart; as *Israel* was resolved to do with their *Cattel in Egypt*, make a through-work; and not leave an hoof behind. The Psalmist professeth (Ps. 119. 104, 128.) that *he hated every false way*: : one, as well as other, and all a like. As God spake of *Amalek*; you should conclude he meaneth, of sin; *None must be spared, but all destroyed.* Wo be to them, that

* Vir bonus ab honesto nulla re deterrebitur; ad turpia nulla spe invitabitur. Sen. Ep. 77. l. 10.

Chap. 16. will be like to *Saul*; *Save the best of the spoyl*. Kindness to any sin is cruelty to that Soul, which shewes it. 'Tis our Saviours Council, *Matt. 5. 29, 30. If thy right eye offend thee, by drawing thee to Iniquity, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: if thy right hand offend thee, by leading thee to sin, cut it off, and cast it from thee.* The right-side Members commonly are most serviceable; and therefore dearer to us. And how necessary a *Right Eye, and Hand*, are to us, all men know. The least that can be here intended is; that if any sin be of equal value, with any of you, to a *right Eye or Hand*; you see there is none other course to be taken, but *Away with it*, it must be parted with. And sure it is; he that is resolved not to *part with sin*, must never look to *meet with God*. They are like the *Ark and Dagon*: both cannot stand up together. Conclude on't therefore; that one of those, must of necessity be parted with. And a man would think, there needed no direction, *whether of them*. And pray remember it, that whoever set their Faces unto *Sion*, will have their backs on *Babylon*: as *Israel* was bound to leave *Egypt*,
if

if ever he hop'd to make for *Canaan* ; Chap 16.
and at first step too, that he sets to-
wards that.

3. Sinner, *Presently attempt, and fall* 3. Dire-
upon thee conscientious practice of all tion.
known duty whatsoever. God hath not
trusted us to be Carvers for our selves ;
as in good truth, we are not fit, so to
be left at our own discretion. But he
keepeth still the staff in his own hands ;
as 'tis most equal that he should. What-
soever therefore he is pleased to com-
mand, we must forthwith readily obey ;
as what he doth forbid, we should ef-
fchew. To be Particular then a while.
Doth God require our Faith, and
Hope, and Fear, in the Eminent and
Highest Act thereof, unto *himself a-*
lone ? Then only He must be so made
our Confidence, and our Dread. Nor
should we fear the face of man, that
would discourage us herein ; or hope
that any Creature can give relief, or
bear us out, in a contrary practice.
If. 8. 12, 13. and *51.* 12, 13. *Jer.* 17.
5. &c. Doth God forbid the making
graven Images, or any likenesses of
things in Heaven or Earth, or Sea ?
Immediately then, away with all *Hea-*
then Idols, and *Popish stocks and stones*,
S where to

Chap. 16. whereto they pay a wicked Homage, and Devotion. Doth he expect an Holy Reverence to his sacred Name? No more, your Hellish Oaths and Blaphemies: and be gone all prophana- tion of his Holy Titles, Attributes, Word, and Works. Should we re- member to keep Holy a Sabbath unto God? Then never again spend Holy time in wicked or vain courses: but convert it wholly to the publick, and private Worship of him. Would he have us to be obedient to our Gover- nours, dutiful to Parents, just and mer- ciful unto our Neighbours, yea, loving to our very Enemies, and temperate to ourselves? Instantly then send back to Hell, from whence they came, all Dis- obedience, open Injustice, and secret Fraud; with all designs and desires thereof: all Gluttony, Drunkenness, Whoredome, with the means thereto, and occasions of the same: that thou may'st henceforth live *soberly*, towards thy self; *righteously* towards thy Neigh- bour, and *Godly*, towards the Almight- y, *in this present World*, Tit. 2. 11, 12. Remembring that Zechary, and his wife, are called righteous; because *they walked in all Gods Commandements*
blame-

blameless, *Luke* 1. 6. And our Psalmist Chap. 16.
 would not secure himself from shame ;
 but by *having respect to* * *all Gods Com-*
mandements, *Psal.* 119. 6. To pick and
 chuse, to take and leave, as shall com-
 ply with Humour, Interest, or the
 Guise and Custom of the World, is the
 part of Hypocrites, whom God abhor-
 reth. A most wicked Herod could do
 many things, *Mark* 6. 20. Thou must
 do all, with thy very best Endeavours.
 Then will Christ take us for his Friends,
 if we do whatsoever he commands us.
John 15. 14.

Sinner, 4. And in order hereto ; ^{4. Direc-}
Presently get more acquaintance with the ^{tion.}
Holy word of God ; and to that purpose,
be studious daily in the same. This is
 not only a Treasure, richer than all the
 Mines of God and Silver in the Indies,
 and the whole world beside : but is suf-
 ficient and abundant, for thy constant
 help, in all distresses incident to thee ;
 even those, wherein all things else, and
 persons too, are but *Physicians of no*
value. Art poor and mean ? There is
 to make thee rich. A Prisoner, and

* *Secularis quoque est sententia ; Eadem velie & ea-*
dem nolle, ea demum firma est amicitia. Hierom. Ep. ad
 Dometriad.

Chap. 16. in durance? To give thee Liberty, and set thee free. Contemned and disgraced? To make thee truly honourable, and exalt thee. There's Physick for sickness: Comfort to grief: Counsel in doubts: and Courage against all fear. Yea, *there* are sure and certain Charmes, against both Satans *Temptations*, and thine own *Corruptions*, and the worlds worst *Afflictions*. In a word; whatever doth, or shall, at any time aile thee; There is to make thee *Happy now; and so, for ever*. Who then would be a stranger to this *Blessed Store-house*, that is so furnished, and yet stands open to us? Who would not daily have to do therewith; and be taking out from thence to his * particular occasions; And yet, alas! how few the Customers are at this Heavenly Market! And how little do they carry with them thence; that are somewhat frequent at coming thither! Therefore, Begin presently; and hold on a daily Trade therewith. *Search the Scriptures*, as our Saviour said, *John 5. 39. Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you*, as his Apostle doth exhort,

* Tunc Scripturæ profunt legenti: Si quod legitur, opere compleatur. Hier. in Mich. l. 2.

Col. 3. 16. *Let thy delight be in the Law* Chap. 16.
of the Lord, and therein meditate day
and night, as Holy David did, Ps. 1. 2.
 If thy low fortune, or any other bad
 Accident in the World, hath bar'd
 thee hitherto from being able to read :
 borrow time from thy sleep, to make
 thee able now. If thou wantest a Bi-
 ble, rather rob thy back and belly, than
 be without one any longer. And if
 thou hast one, and canst use it : 'twere
 better that thou shouldst refuse thy
 meales, than neglect the study of that
 Blessed Book, which only hath the
 food of Souls therein. *Job*, a wise, as
 well as good man, was of this opinion.
I esteemed the words of thy Mouth more
than my necessary food, said he, *chapt.*
 23. 12. He could better, as it seemeth,
 have been without his Victuals (with-
 out which, you know, we can not
 live) than have been without acquaint-
 ance and Conversation with the Holy
 Scriptures. Thou therefore, after his
 example, duly, and daily study them;
 and be as constant at it as thou wouldst
 be at thy meales. Be not like them
 that spend their time in * Philosophy,

* *Erubescat superbus & infelix peccator, cui plus pla-*
cet Ars Aristotelis quam scientia de Apostolis; plus co-
deix Platonis, quam liber divinus. Aug. Spec. Pecc. c. 6.

Chap. 16. Romances, Playes : but never look upon a Bible. Though Papists shut them up from the *Vulgar* People, and do with *all men* vilely blast their Reputation ; as if they would do little good at best ; and likely might do a deal of hurt ; know thou that *their betters infinitely* do commend acquaintance with them even in *Children* ; and pronounce them able to *make thee wise unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. And One *Apostle*, ought to be preferred to Millions of *Apostates*.

5. Direction.

Sinner, 5. *Presently raise, and constantly keep a Watch upon thy self, that so thou mayst avoid, or else overcome the many Temptations that will assault thee.* Wherever thou art, one snare or other lyeth in wait to draw thee back from, or turn thee out of thy way to Heaven. There are indeed both Enemies abroad, with whom thou hast to deal ; and a Traytor too at home, a *deceitful heart* within, to be diligently taken care of. Which, tho' they must not discourage thee ; yet may they well awaken and alarm thee to stand upon thy guard. 'Twas universal Counsel of our Saviour, *What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch ;* Mark 13. 37. And therefore,

I. As

to Think and Turn.

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1. As to the danger from without: Chap. 15.
I shall only caution thee, at this time, 1. Against
against *Bad-men* and *Women*; with danger
whom the World, and every corner from
of it is too full. Take special heed, without.
and care unto thy self; that neither *Bad-Men*.
their * *Examples*, nor their *Counsels*;
no, nor their *Threats*, and *Terrors*,
may draw thee back from God, or
stop thy chearful progress in his Ho-
ly fear and service. A world of mis-
chief of this kind hath been done to
others, by this way. If a wise Man,
and an old Professor, was overcome
by this means; as *Solomons Wives turn-*
ed away his Heart from God in his elder
dayes, 1 *King* 11. 4; What may thy
danger be; who art but yet in the In-
fancy of thy Profession? What mis-
chief had that wicked * *Elymas* done
to *Sergius Paulus* in turning him from
the Faith; had not a Blessed *Paul* been
neer to hinder it, *Acts* 13. 8, 10? And
notwithstanding great *Convictions*
were among the *Jewes*, no man durst

* Inter causas malorum nostrorum est, quod vivimus
ad exempla: nec ratione componimur, sed consuetudine ab-
ducimur. Sen. Ep. 124.

* Velocius, et citius nos Corruptunt vitiorum exem-
pla domestica. Juven. Sat. 14.

Chap. 16. speak openly of Christ, for fear of the other *Jewes*, *John* 7. 16. And 'tis a constant Truth, that holdeth good in all times and places; that *those after the Flesh will persecute them after the Spirit*, when opportunity shall be offered. Arme therefore against all assaults that thou be never surprized, and overcome thereby. Especially beware of *choosing* * Evil Company, and delighting in them. 'Tis like the Pitch, which will defile, and leave some filth behind it. When did we see a rusty sword, or knife made bright by lying with another, that had no rust upon it? But quickly will the bright one get a Tang of rust from the other.

2. Danger from within.

2. As to danger within: keep strictest watch, and make good the Avenues, where Satan is most busie in his mischievous approaches. These are thy *Thoughts*, *Affections*, and thy *Senses*. Our words and works must be regarded diligently, I acknowledge. But if we make sure to stop the Fountain-Well, the streams will dry of themselves. Now, *out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, and*

* *Bonis convivendum; malos autem vitandos.* Cypr. Test. l. 3. 95.

other wickednesses, faith our Lord, Chap. 16.
Matt. 15. 19.

I. Look well unto thy * *Thoughts*: I. Thought:
those *busie, restless, spawning* things. And so much the rather have especial care of them, because a silly World of sinners would, by a misapplied Proverb, make them lawless, saying, *Thoughts are free*. However they may escape with men; 'tis certain God Almighty doth both observe them; and will call persons to a reckoning for them. For they must make a good share amongst *those secrets, which God will judge*. Rom. 2. 16. *Jerusalem* was rebuked therefore, for suffering but *vain thoughts to lodge within her*, * Jer. 4. 14. And *Simon Magnus* was bad to pray, that the *thoughts of his heart might be forgiven him*, Act. 8. 22. If these shall not be guarded well; they being a *polluted Legion*, what a numberless brood of *Words, and Actions* like themselves, will quickly issue from them? If you indulge, and play with *Atheistical, Blasphemous, Malicious, Wanton, and other wicked Thoughts*; farewel Re-

* *Stultorum pravorumque operum cogitatio penitendo debet excidi.* Bed. in luc. 21. * *Usque quo iniquis cogitationibus subiacet.* Hier. in loc.

Chap. 16. ligation with you ; and you soon grew Masters in the black Art of Wickedness !

2. Affections.
ons.

2. Watch thine *Affections*, or thy Passions, also. These are unto the Soul, like weights upon the Clock, which make all the Wheeles to run, that before stood still. If thou do not govern, and direct them well ; they will quickly hurry thee upon any precipice. See some Examples of the danger hence. *Eli's fond Love* did utterly undoe his Sons, and Family, 1 *Sam.*

3. On the other hand ; *Ahabs vile hatred* made him disbelieve the Prophets Message , to his ruine, 1 *King.* 22: The wicked *Desire* of riches brought a sad Plague therewith to *Achan*, *Josh.* 7. Nay, Good *Moses's Anger* broke the Table written with Gods own finger, *Exod.* 32. And *Peters slavish fear* made him deny his Master, and Dear Redeemer, *Mat.* 26: And other Passions, not guided by Reason and Religion, have had like mischiefs following of them. Whereas if you but set affections on their Proper Objects, and * ma-

* *Rationi victoria paratur, cum ea perturbationibus modum, mediocritatemque imposuit. Plut. de virt. mor. nage*

nage them duly : they will be Oyl unto your Wheelles, and Wings unto your feet, to speed you heaven-ward. Let us but get, and keep a vigorous Love to God, Hatred to Sin ; earnest desire for Heaven, with indignation against whatsoever hinders our halting thither ; with the fear of nothing but offending our Redeemer ; what happy progress shall we make, till we arrive in safety at our Fathers house !

3. Watch thy Senses also. These ^{3. Senses.} are as so many * Windows, or Casements rather, to let in foul Contagion to the Soul ; if they be not shut close, or open'd warily. What a Crew of Robbers crept in at David's Eyes ? And 'twas, for want of keeping Centry there. In the 2 Sam. 11. we may find the guilt of Whoredom, Drunkenness, most gross Hypocrisie, and flat Murder at the last. Partly through that, and through another Gate unto the Soul, the Ear, I mean ; the Destroyer of the World brake in upon it ; the first sin, Gen. 3. Job therefore will

* Per quinque sensus, quasi per quasdam fenestras, vitiorum ad animam introitus est. Non potest ante Metropolis & Arx mentis capi, nisi per portas ejus irruerit hostilis exercitus. Hieron. Adv. Jovin. l. 2. c. 37.

Chap. 16. *make a Covenant with his Eyes*, ch. 31.1.

And our Saviour charged his Disciples, to take heed what they heard, Mar. 4.24. For 'tis well known, that *Evil Communication* (when attended to) *corrupteth good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33. And how often do we see mens *Taste* indulged, betray them to the brutish, and destroying Vices, both of *Gluttony* and *Drunkenness*? So that 'tis easie for you to judge of the * horrible danger from the other Senses, as well as these; if there be not diligent Care, and watch upon them. Stand therefore alwaies on your guard, against both Dangers that are from without you, and within you too.

6. Direction.

6. Lastly, *Presently begin, and constantly hold on, in that most heavenly Exercise of fervent Prayer; tho' upon earth so much neglected!* And notwithstanding thou perhaps canst not yet so well discharge the same, as thy self wouldst wish: be * not discouraged; but remember, that the Rhetorique

* *Portæ mortis sunt sensus nostri.* Greg. M. in Psalm Penit. 4.

* *Multum precari, est ad eum quem precamur diuturnâ, & piâ cordis excitatione pulsare. Nam plerumq; hoc negotium plus gemitibus quam sermonibus agitur; plus fletu, quam affatu.* Aug. Ep. 121. c. 10.

which

which prevails with God, is not Elegant Speech, Proper Method, and a Voluble Tongue; but *sighs, and groans*, of a contrite Heart, and broken Spirit. Read *Isa.* 38. 14. *Rom.* 8. 26. *1 Sam.* 1. 13. *Psal.* 38. 9. This is for the secret overtures betwixt God, and thine own Soul. As for *such publick shewes of Fervour and Devotion* in the open Congregation, I am apt to be afraid thereof; for what our Saviour said in a Case so near it, *Mat.* 6. 17, 18. But that thou shouldst be diligent, and constant in this Duty of *fervent Prayer*; *first, thine own necessity* cryeth aloud. What canst thou do, of thy self, against *Corruptions*, under *Temptations*, or *Afflictions*? Alas! Thine whole *sufficiency is from God*, *2 Cor.* 3. 5. And for both, *to will*, and *do*; thou must be unto him beholden, *Phil.* 2. 12. How necessary therefore is it, that thou shouldst make thy earnest application unto him for succour? *Then next, the Command of God hereto*, enforceth thine obligation. Doth he not bid us, *Pray without ceasing*; and continually to be ready for it, as opportunity shall be offered us, *1 Thes.* 5. 17. Did not the poor Widdow thus prevail, *Luk.* 18. 1.

&c.

Chap. 16. *Exc?* And doth not God expect the same from us, if we expect success with him, Ezek. 36. 37? And lastly, what Encouragement doth he give us hereto, by his Gracious Promises? *Ask and we shall receive*, Mat. 7. 7. Yea, *whatsoever we ask* (that will serve Gods glory and our own Good) *in the Name of Christ*, is assured to us, John 16. 23. Let me averre it boldly, for 'tis undoubted truth; The only certain Reason, why men do not speed for mercy is, either because they do not ask, or ask not as they ought to do. *Ye have not; because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not; because ye ask amiss*; is the Holy Apostle James his doctrine, Chap. 4. 2, 3. Remember therefore this great Direction with the rest; and indeed, to make the *other* and this *whole Discourse* the more successfull to thee. Go; beg of God, through Jesus Christ; with bended knees, and a prostrate heart; that he would convince thee of the *Grand Importance and flat necessity of thy present turning from thy sin to Christ*; and that thou maist have serious thoughts upon thy waies, and they may surely prove successful to that happy purpose. Beseech him; to instruct thee in those other needful truths
inferred

infern'd from thence : and to make the Chap. 16.
past Expostulations with thee, and Coun-
sel given to thee, prevailing and effectual
for present and sincere Conversion to him-
self. And give not over, until thou
 find indeed another Spirit in thee, and
 that thou art become a New Creature.

To conclude the whole. I have, ^{Conclu-}
 my Brethren, as you see, been labour- ^{sion.}
 ing to instruct, perswade, and direct
 you in the weightiest Business of your
 Lives, and Souls ; and that, as faith-
 fully as I can. Nor shall I doubt of
 the sufficiency thereof, with the Divine
 Blessing, if you will honestly pursue
 the Counsel given you, But, what is
 to a * *Poyson'd Man the best Anti-*
dote in the World, if he set it in the Win-
dow, or only let it stand upon the Table,
and will not take it into his Body ? Sad-
 ly, dye he must : there is no remedy.
 I shall therefore, for my Farewel, say
 to you, what Moses did to Israel, Deut.
 30. 19. *I call Heaven and Earth to record,*

* *Quando Sanari poterit, qui me dicam Spernit ;*
medicinam conculat ? Bernh. de Nat. Dom. Serm 3.

Chap. 16. *that I have set before you Life and Death, blessing and cursing : therefore chuse life : and that, without more adoe. Think on your waies, and turn your feet unto Gods Testimonies : make haste, and delay not, to keep his Commandements.*

FINIS.

